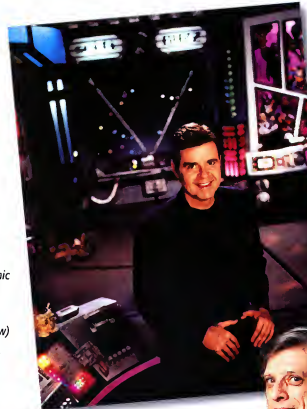
Harlan Ellison sets the universe on fire each week on the not-to-be-missed *Sci-Fi Buzz*.

BY KIMBERLY A. HEMPHILL

WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME YOU HAD TO LOOK UP A WORD that you heard on TV? That long? Then you either have a great vocabulary already, or you're missing Harlan Ellison's "Buzz Words" segment on *Sci-Fi Buzz*.

***Sci-Fi Buzz* is an original weekly half-hour series dedicated to covering the latest and greatest in the realms of science fiction movies, classic TV, SF literature and more.**

"Buzz Words" alone is worth the price of admission, with writer/critic Harlan Ellison offering commentaries on just about everything. (Here at the Channel, my friend, Sue, is responsible for transcribing the "Buzz Words" segments for posting on the Internet, and she occasionally asks me for a second opinion in deciphering Ellison's more cryptic passages. "Did he say 'flense'?" "Yeah, Sue, he did.")





Mike Jerrick (right) plays ringmaster on Sci-Fi Buzz, *the cosmic circus where renowned author Harlan Ellison (below) is the star attraction.*

As always, Ellison waxes eloquent on such varied topics as the Hugo Awards, fan conventions, undeservedly famous and equally unjustly obscure science fiction authors, the demise of mom-and-pop bookstores, and his 1947 Packard. In the past, Ellison referred to people who tax his patience as "pismires"; nowadays, "pinhead" seems to be his epithet of choice. But there's no one else like him for honest, intelligent, deeply felt, idiosyncratic insights into life in general and the genre of science fiction in particular.

Cable ACE Award-nominee and real-life sci-fi fan Mike Jerrick hosts the show, which lives up to its promise to viewers: that they will not miss out on any important sci-fi news as long as they are watching *Sci-Fi Buzz*. Serious fans and devotees of vintage science fiction will enjoy the retro segments, spotlighting classic horror and sci-fi from the '30s, '40s and '50s. "Bob's Basement" is another popular feature, with avid collector Bob Burns sharing with viewers his unparalleled private collection of sci-fi memorabilia. Remember those fantastic creatures in the cantina scene in *Star Wars*? Bob's got them in his basement, along with treasures from movies like *The Fly* and *Alien*, and much more. Jerrick also covers conventions for *Sci-Fi Buzz*, most recently the first *Hercules/Xena* get- together in Los Angeles.

In past episodes, *Buzz* has shone the spotlight on movie directors as disparate as Kenneth Branagh, John Carpenter, and James Whale, along with profiles of authors like Kim Stanley Robinson and Frederik Pohl, and features on popular TV shows, from *Dark Shadows* and *Star Trek* to *Babylon 5* and *The X-Files*. The highlight of an *X-Files* segment was a fascinating tour through the show's prop room, where fans could catch glimpses of Scully's headstone and buckets of Chaco chicken.

Comic books and animation are also covered, with features on Ben Edlund, creator of cult favorite *The Tick*, Stan Lee, father, as it were, of *The Hulk* and *Spiderman*, and Chuck Jones, of Bugs Bunny/Daffy Duck/Wile E. Coyote fame.

Stay tuned to *Buzz* for segments on happenings in Roswell, N. M., in honor of the 50th anniversary of this still-unexplained event.

A Sci-Fi Channel exclusive, *Sci-Fi Buzz* airs in the U.S. on Thursdays at 10PM ET and 2AM ET, with repeats Saturdays at 1PM ET and Sundays at 9AM ET. UK viewers can catch *Buzz Bytes*, short segments of the American version, which are shown between programs. Sci-Fi

Continued on page 13

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Loose Figures with paint condition 15.00 ea
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Loose Figures with paint condition 15.00 ea
(with weapons or accessories)
Admiral Ackbar, AT-ST Driver, Bespin Guard, Bespin Security Guard, Boba Fett, Chief Chirpa, Emperor, Gamorrean Guard, Han Solo (Endor), Han Solo (Hoth), Imperial Officer, Lando Calrissian, Leia Boushh, Leia Organa, Logray, Luke Jedi, Luke Pilot, Luke Stormtrooper, Nien Nunb, Princess Leia Organa, Ree-Yees, Scout Trooper, Snowtrooper, Wicket
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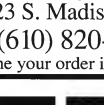
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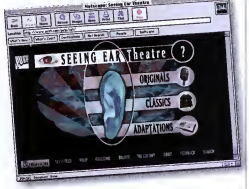


ABOVE: Sci-Fi Buzz *has visited* The X-Files' *prop room.* BELOW: *The newest Dominion.*

UK has also produced its own original shows under the same title. These have included coverage of "Cult TV '96," with a camera following a family around a cult convention, an interview with *Fortean Times* editor Mike Dash, filmed at the Tower of London and other London sights, the F.A.C.T.S. comic convention in Belgium, and the *Star Trek* Convention. (I wonder how many Vulcans it took to fill the Albert Hall?)

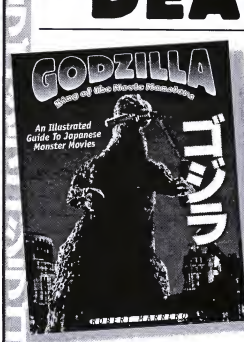
But the big news from Sci-Fi UK is the advent of their original sci-fi news show. As of this printing, it's still without a title, but keep an eye on this column for a full report coming soon.

There's something new under the sun.



Worlds have collided on the "Dominion," the Sci-Fi Channel's site on the World Wide Web: The golden age of radio has converged with the medium of the future to create "Seeing Ear Theatre", where classic radio shows, famous literature audio narratives and illustrated radio adventures are now available to a new generation of listeners. Utilizing RealAudio technology, "Seeing Ear Theatre" houses digitized versions of original radio stories, complete and uncut, from the 1930s through the 1960s, along with adaptations of famous literary works and new, original material. Celebrity readings are also on the agenda. Each week brings something new, so check out the web site right away (www.scifi.com). □

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Star Trek goes Imax, TV goes 3-D, And Bruce Willis becomes immortal.

BY ROBERT MARTIN

PARAMOUNT'S PLANS FOR ITS NEXT *STAR TREK* THEATRICAL FILM have been revealed – the show biz trade *Variety* reports that the new film will be a forty-minute "short" made for the relatively low budget of $10 million. The exciting aspect of the deal, still in negotiation, is that the film will be made in the huge and deep Imax 3-D format. As we write, the particulars of the deal are still being hammered out; it hasn't been decided yet whether the film will feature *Next Generation*, *Deep Space Nine*, or *Voyager* castmembers. One intriguing possibility is a cast culled from all three series, possibly with a cameo or two from the original *Trek* series cast. A third possibility is an entirely new cast, in yet another variation of the durable franchise.

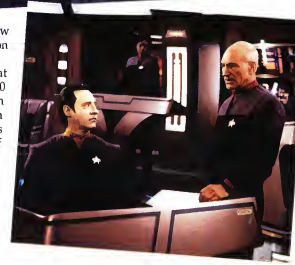


Star Trek is about to go where no sci-fi series has ever gone before – onto your local IMAX screen – though just which crew will make the incredible journey has yet to be decided.

One drawback is that there are only about 100 Imax theaters all of North America, and only one in the U.K. — in Bradford's National Museum of Photo, Film and Television, with a second soon to open in London's Science Museum. Though the company will be expanding quite a bit this year, some fans may have to make a long trek to the nearest Imax screen. The company has made some great films for the format in recent years, particularly *Wings of Courage*, but the *Trek* project seems like the perfect draw to give audiences a reason to try out the stunning "Imax experience."

Small-screen 3-D is happening as well. We told you a few months ago about the 3-D season finale coming up for *3rd Rock From The Sun*. In the U.S., ABC is stealing NBC's thunder by incorporating 3-D sequences into the plotlines of several of its sitcoms, all in a special "3-D Week" this May, a few days before the *3rd Rock* season closer. By now, you've had a chance to see how it all turned out. The network has promised to add depth to as many as ten shows, though the deal was only set for six at the time of the announcement. Because the two networks are using incompatible 3-D systems, fans will have to swallow both Barq's root beer and a Wendy's sandwich in order to get a grip on the appropriate glasses.

Bruce Willis, soon to be on the big screen in *The Fifth Element*, is also in line to become a virtual presence on your computer screen. Activision has granted Willis major profit participation, as well as a piece of the company, in exchange for Willis's participation in the creation of a "virtual actor" that will star in Activision's next-generation computer game *Apocalypse*. A 3-D action game in the tradition of *Doom* and *Quake*, *Apocalypse* will take the concept to the next level with an interactive plot, following the pattern of the popular "buddy movie" action film. In order to become your virtual buddy, Willis will be scanned and motion captured, in addition to appearing in cut-film scenes and providing the



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ABOVE: *Lowell Cunningham's cult sci-fi comic book* Men In Black *makes it to the big screen at last thanks to Rick Baker's peerless make-up effects.* TOP RIGHT: *Members of the FX team hard at work animating one of the film's many comedic aliens.*

voice for "virtual Bruce." Side-by-side with Willis, gamers will cut a bloody swath through four levels of Earth gone mad, each level ruled by one of the Biblical "Horsemen of the Apocalypse," namely War, Famine, Pestilence and Death. Though it's expected to appear in several formats, the game will be released first for Sony's Playstation platform; that release is scheduled for this fall.

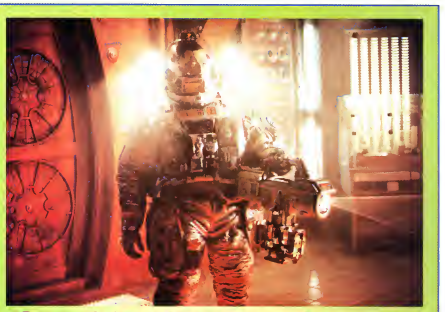
Columbia Pictures, while barely lifting the veil on its first big SF release of the year, Luc Besson's *The Fifth Element*, has adopted a policy of full disclosure on *Men In Black*; director Barry Sonnenfeld, along with production designer Robert Welsh and the incomparable makeup effects man Rick Baker, met with selected press in February to provide a generous preview — some 20 minutes of footage — and answer reporter's questions.

The footage looked great; Tommy Lee Jones and Will Smith are just as good together as you'd expect; Jones especially allows the comedy to work by underplaying the role (unlike *Batman Forever*, where he seemed to be in competition with his makeup). And the footage we saw provides a fantastic showcase for the aliens produced by a collaboration between Rick Baker, the king of all makeup effects, and premier visual effects house Industrial Light and Magic. "Rick takes the script and uses it as more of a jumping-off point," Sonnenfeld told the gathered press, "rather than producing what is literally in the script, he produced stuff that is fantastic and funny and scary, all at the same time."

The particular triumph of *Men In Black* for Baker is that this film will demonstrate that the art of makeup effects still has much to offer in this digital age. The excellent work on view in *MIB* speaks well for the prospects of Baker's next project, the remake of *Mighty Joe Young* for Disney.

Things don't look quite so bright for the planned remake of *King Kong* at Universal. Without stating any particular reason, the studio has back-burnered the project, with the possibility that it may be put back on the fast track sometime in 1998; the speculation is that Universal lost its faith in director Peter Jackson when his horror comedy *The Frighteners* failed to ignite major box office.

But don't cry for him, Argentina — Jackson, as a lifelong fan, was hesitant about remaking the classic ape movie, and he's now in talks with Miramax and producer Saul Zaentz (this year's Big Man at the Oscars) about a live-action film based on *The Lord of the Rings*. Zaentz, who controls the screen rights to all of Tolkien's work, is hoping to create one or more films that will erase the memory of the two animated adaptations he produced in the late seventies, Ralph Bakshi's condensed version of *LOTR*, and Rankin-



Event Horizon and Beyond

As we go to press, filming is nearly completed at London's Pinewood Studios on *Event Horizon*, the Paul Anderson-directed flick of a spaceship that must pass through the heart of a treacherous black hole. We've managed to obtain a sneak peek at Laurence Fishburne (pictured above), who plays Captain Miller, the head of a rescue mission sent in the year 2046 to salvage the prototype spaceship Event Horizon, which has been missing for seven years. Also starring are Sam Neill, Kathleen Quinlan and Joely Richardson. This Paramount British Pictures Ltd..'s release. is one of the largest productions ever to be filmed in the U.K., occupying no less than seven soundstages at Pinewood, including the huge *007* stage. The Visual Effects Supervisor is Richard Yuricich, a three time Academy Award nominee who has worked on such sci-fi classics as *Blade Runner* and *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*. Watch for it in theaters later this Fall.

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ABOVE: Spiderman *faces a villain more dangerous than the Green Goblin on his way to the big screen — bankruptcy court!* BELOW: *The original* Mighty Joe Young, *soon to be Disney-fied.*

Bass's television treatment of *The Hobbit*. The Miramax deal isn't entirely set yet, but Zaentz says that both Universal and Dreamworks SKG are waiting in the wings for a crack at *LOTR*, if the Miramax plan falls through.

New Line is betting big that *Lost In Space* will become a popular franchise; they already have a Saturday morning cartoon series and a new live-action TV show on the drawing board. The cartoon is planned for a January, 1998 debut, several months before the film's May theatrical bow. The TV series plans will remain flexible until after the film's opening; if the picture is a blockbuster, the series will be delayed until after a theatrical sequel — the entire cast (William Hurt as John Robinson, Mimi Rogers as his wife Maureen, Heather Graham of *Swingers* as Judy, Lacey Chabert as Penny, Jack Johnson as Will, Sean Patrick Flanery of *Powder* as Don West, and Gary Oldman as Dr. Smith) has been signed for two films, and is not expected to sign up for the small-screen version. Both series will be pitched to the networks, with syndication on the horizon if the nets decide to pass. Of course, the original 83 episodes of *Lost In Space* remain highly visible on the Sci-Fi Channel.

Alan McElroy, who wrote the screenplay for New Line's forthcoming *Spawn* feature, has been hired by Constantin Films to adapt Capcom's popular Playstation game *Resident Evil* as a feature film. The game is a 3-D shooter in which a U.S. paramilitary team faces an onslaught of genetically mutated creatures in a secluded mansion. Constantin is the production company behind Chris Columbus's *Fantastic Four* project as well as a screen version of Marvel's *Silver Surfer*, both planned for 1998 release.



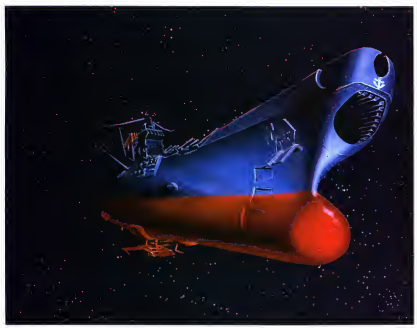
The good news about *Spiderman* is that an L.A. bankruptcy court has awarded Carolco's rights to this project, and the contract tying James Cameron as director, to MGM, which has formed a subsidiary, Webspinner, Inc., to pursue the project. The bad news: several other companies, including Viacom and Columbia Pictures, claim to hold rights to the character, and there's no easy settlement in sight.

John Carpenter, while still involved in the development of Ed Pressman Films' *The Mutant Chronicles*, adapted from a role-playing game, has tagged his next feature as Largo Entertainment's *Vampire$*, about a team of greed-motivated vampire hunters who slay bloodsuckers in order to collect big bucks from the the Roman Catholic church. Largo is also behind *Graceland*, casting Harvey Keitel as the living Elvis — now in his sixties, wandering the desert in order to do good. Bridget Fonda will costar as "Marilyn."

Not just Elvis and Marilyn are on the comeback trail; Hitler lives in *Conversation With The Beast*, the directorial debut of Armin Mueller-Stall, the veteran actor and Oscar nominee for his supporting role in *Shine*. The picture, consisting primarily of an extended conversation between an American reporter (Bob Balaban of *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*) and a centenarian who claims to be "Der Feuhrer" (Mueller-Stall), kept alive through dark magic, created a sensation at the recent Berlin Film Festival, where the picture's effort to humanize the face of the monster won both praise and criticism. A U.S. outfit, Santa Monica Pictures, picked up worldwide theatrical rights, and is currently seeking a U.S. distribution deal.

Christopher Reeve is in talks about his return to the big screen, in an updated version of *Rear Window*, originally adapted by Alfred Hitchcock from a Cornell Woolrich story. In the revised story, the pro-

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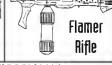
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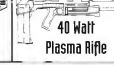

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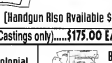

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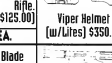

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tagonist will be a quadriplegic whose apartment is equipped with high-tech voice-activated devices. As in the original, Reeve will be a witness to a murder that he can't prove occurred.

Speaking of monsters, Clive Barker has signed a fat multiyear development deal with Fox Television that calls for the horror scribe to develop and produce series pilots, TV movies, and even kiddie programming for the network. The first fruit of the deal will be a series of TV movies, umbrella-titled *Clive Barker's Spirits and Shadows* debuts this fall; the first three titles are *Silo*, *Shock Cinema*, and *Hoop Cinema*.

The current crop of television pilots boast an unusual number of supernaturally-themed shows, some of which are already lined up for series production. Anne Rice's dead cop "buddy" show for CBS, *Rag and Bone*, leads the ranks on my list of promising shows (*Forever Knight* producer Jim Parriott is also involved in this one), followed by *The Visitor*, the Devlin-Emmerich series concerning an alien's sojourn on Earth, which has a 13-episode order at Fox. Also intriguing are Warner Brothers's ABC pilot *Hungry For Survival*, concerning a mutant "Homo Superior" on the run from the government; for CBS, WB is also tackling a live-action *Justice League of America* telefilm, to see if several top-ranking DC superheros can compound their ratings, and *The Travel Agency*, booking trips into the past in the "do-gooder" mold of *Early Edition* and *Touched by an Angel*.

WB's own TV network has a pilot in the works called *Almost Gone*, about a physician whose near-death experience leaves him in touch with the newly-dead, and compelled to tidy up the messes left behind so they can proceed to the next plane. Darker spirits will hold sway in Jim Henson Productions' *The Van Helsing Chronicles*, about a descendent of Dracula's nemesis who has expanded the family franchise to hunt down monsters of all stripes, *X-Files* style. NBC has its own "do-gooder" in *Sleepwalkers*, developed by David Goyer of *Crow II* for producer David Nutter of *Babylon 5*, in which a group of scientists enter their subject's dreams to help straighten out their lives.

Fox also has a few tricks that remain up its sleeve for now, including a new drama from Glen Morgan and James Wong of *Space: Above and Beyond* and *The X-Files*, and a new drama called *The Door*, created by comic Damon Wayans, that is rumored to have a supernatural tinge.

A final reminder that it pays to stay in school: 29-year-old Patrick Roddy was attending a class called "Pitching to the Pros" at UCLA, and did such a good job in his classwork that his teacher hooked him up with Debra Hill's company; he's been hired to write a script from his 10-page outline, *Meet John Doe*. The story, concerning a serial killer who eludes authorities by travelling through time, is currently in development for the big screen. □

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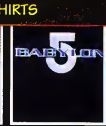


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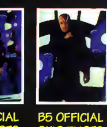
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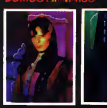


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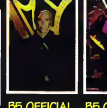
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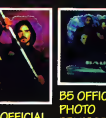


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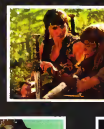
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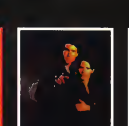
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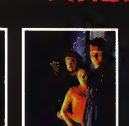
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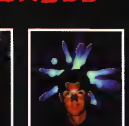
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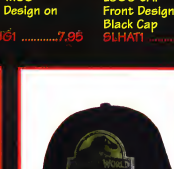
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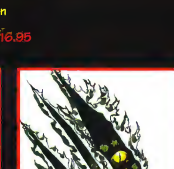
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George Lucas built himself a better *Star Wars*, but he wasn't the only one to improve on success.

BY STEVEN PUCHALSKI

THE OVERWHELMING SUCCESS OF THE *STAR WARS* TRILOGY reissue proved that fans not only appreciate the big screen experience, but were also anxious to see the changes Lucas had made, and how '90s technology could be used to upgrade films long etched into our consciousness. The debate still rages whether the embellished sequences are a plus or a simple distraction, but one thing's for sure – this type of after-the-fact restoration is nothing new when it comes to sci-fi cinema, as directors return to earlier works in order to correct old problems, or simply reinstate elements that had been dropped due to running time or Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA) constraints.

One of the first filmmakers to embrace this idea was Steven Spielberg, with his 1980 theatrical release of *Close Encounters: The Special Edition* (Columbia/Tri-Star). After *CE3K*'s initial success, Spielberg convinced Columbia Pictures to pony up $2 million so he could recut the film and add an effects-laden finale inside of the Mother Ship. As a result, Spielberg scissored more than 15 minutes from the original movie, added seven minutes of editing room leftovers, and capped it off with a newly-shot, six-minute scene of Richard Dreyfuss' first glimpse inside the giant UFO. Upon its release, Spielberg called his '77 version a "work-in-progress," and considered this *Special Edition* the only true version of the movie.



Some of the changes are relatively minor, with the elimination of some jokey dialogue and more early scenes of Neary (Dreyfuss) and his family. In a positive move, Spielberg trimmed bits with Neary sculpting the Devil's Tower out of mashed potatoes and building a larger replica in his living room; while adding a touching sequence of a terrified Neary locked in his bathroom under the running shower. And one of the most intriguing new episodes has U.S. scientists discovering a ship mysteriously sitting in the middle of the Gobi desert. Still, the movie's primary appeal was due to its new ending, which offered up a (now dated) lightshow for effects-hungry viewers. Unfortunately, Spielberg's mistake was to attempt to visualize something which *CE3K* fans had spent three years formulating on their own, and no matter how spectacular the result, it could only be a letdown in comparison to one's own imagination. In this instance, less was definitely more.

During the '80s, director Joe Dante also fine-tuned two of his movies, in almost unnoticeable



ABOVE: *Now that you've revisited the* Star Wars *saga, it's time to see what other directors have done to their cinematic offspring.* RIGHT: *There's even more footage of Christopher Lambert in the expanded version of* Highlander.

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ABOVE: *Daryl Hannah plays a replicant femme fatale in* Blade Runner: The Director's Cut. BELOW: Close Encounters of the Third Kind *was one of the first sci-fi films to release a Special Edition.*

ways. 1985's *Explorers* (Paramount) touted itself as a "special home video version," but all Dante did was eliminate one scene, and add another. Out went a walk-to-school between young Ethan Hawke and River Phoenix; and in came a final fantasy sequence, when Hawke falls asleep in school, dreams that their "Thunder Road" spaceship reappears, and the four friends (including his new girlfriend) are seen flying. Years later, in *Gremlins 2: The Next Batch* (Warners), Dante's video version has a "gremlinized surprise", that deletes a scene set in a movie theatre, during which the playful vandals mess about with the projector. In its place, he inserts a sequence which has the gremlins taking over the VCR.

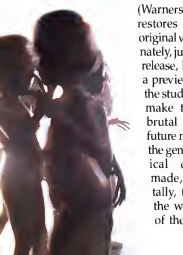
Without question, one of the best examples of why a filmmaker should be allowed to work without outside interference is *Blade Runner: The Director's Cut* (Warners), which simply restores Ridley Scott's original version. Unfortunately, just before its 1982 release, low marks from a preview audience had the studio scrambling to make this gorgeously brutal vision of the future more palatable to the general public. Radical changes were made, and coincidentally, these were also the weakest portions of the movie. It took more than a decade for this earlier cut to finally resurface, giving hardcore fans their first chance to see it in a letterboxed format, and minus its studio-forced 'dumbing down'.

The changes are simple, but important. The first thing jettisoned was the constant voice-over by Deckard (Harrison Ford), which might've paid homage to the film noir genre, but also sledgehammered home every subtle moment in the movie. In addition, there's a fantasy snippet involving a unicorn as Deckard plays the piano, and, best of all, the elimination of the sappy ending, which had Deckard and Rachel (Sean Young) flying off into a green new world, accompanied by the sudden revelation that replicant Rachel actually has a human life span. Now, the film ends on an appropriately ambiguous note. In its original form, *Blade Runner* is unquestionably a fine film; in its restored version, it's all the more apparent, a science fiction masterpiece.

One of the most notable examples of this trend can be seen in the five-disc laser release of the dystopian epic, *Brazil* (Criterion), highlighted by Terry Gilliam's 142-minute "final director's cut ", which is ten minutes longer than the U.S. release. The most intriguing supplement contains a bastardized, 94-minute version of the film, pieced together by Universal Pictures in hopes of creating a more marketable product. In this truncated cut, instead of following everyman Sam Lowry through a dehumanizing urban landscape, any 'disturbing' elements are dropped in favor of a fantasy love story. Dubbed the "Love Conquers All" version, it's a lesson in how two radically differing versions can be made from the same scraps of celluloid.

The director's cut contains a number of subtle changes, some of which will be noticeable to only the most alert viewers. An early restaurant scene between Sam (Jonathan Pryce) and his mother begins with a package she's carried setting off the metal detectors. And the fantasy battle with a giant samurai is extended and kept as one lengthy scene, unlike the original, which scatters it throughout the movie. Most of the additional footage is slipped into the final half-hour though; with Sam and Jill's bedroom liaison stretching into the morning, as he awakens to her dressed in nothing but a strategically tied gift ribbon. Once captured, he's subjected to several minutes of never-before-seen interrogation (all shot with Sam's P.O.V., through a slit in his laundry-bag-style restraints). As a grim capper, Sam is also visited in prison by his old boss, dressed in a Santa Claus suit, who informs him that Jill was killed while resisting arrest. These sequences might not be the most upbeat additions, but they do help to make a great film even more powerful.

James Cameron is a longtime advocate of tinkering with his films after their release. Seventeen minutes were added to his laserdisc edition of *Aliens* (Fox Video), including early scenes of Ripley being informed that while she's been frozen in space, her daughter has aged and died; and shots of Newt with her family on their way to explore the alien spaceship, with her father becoming the colony's first face-hugger victim. The same was done with the laser release of *Terminator 2: Judgement Day* (Live), which restores 15 minutes of material shorn before release, including a brief dream sequence featuring the deceased Reese (an uncredited Michael Biehn), and the reprogramming of the T-800 (Schwarzenegger) by Sarah and John. In both cases, it's fun to





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check out the additional footage, even if the new scenes essentially add little to the overall effect of the film.

Surprisingly, the most exciting additions were added to one of Cameron's least financially-successful projects, *The Abyss* (Fox Video), starred Ed Harris as the commander of deep-sea drilling rig crew who end up trapped underwater while checking out a damaged sub. If that wasn't bad enough, there's also a psychotic Navy SEAL, his ex-wife, the possibility of nuclear war, and an encounter with a watery NTI (Non-Terrestrial Intelligence). When first released, most gave the film positive marks, but criticized the climactic alien encounter, which seemed like little more than an eleventh hour, *CE3K* retread.

With 28 minutes worth of restored footage and an epic-lengthed, 171-minute running time, many of the film's original shortcomings vanish — and this shines as one of Cameron's best works. Though still a bit overwrought, the characters are fleshed out with several scenes detailing the daily routine of the rigging team, and more info about Harris' marital break-up. Most important, the alien plot strand now has a global resonance, as Harris is taken into the creatures' gigantic ship and the translucent NTIs bombard him with television images of man's inhumanity to man. Cameron also adds a spectacular sequence in which several different coastal locales are threatened by a half-



James Cameron's The Abyss *features some of the best additional footage of any director's cut.*

mile-high tidal wave, created, and then frozen in mid-air by the aliens, in an attempt to teach mankind to cease their above-ground hostilities.

The "director's cut" of Russell Mulcahy's 1986 sci-fi favorite, *Highlander* (Republic), actually turns out to be nothing more than the slightly-longer European print, that restores a handful of slight, but important sequences. The story remains the same, as immortal Connor MacLeod (Christopher Lambert) bounces between parallel tales — from mud-caked, 16th century Scotland and equally ageless mentor Sean Connery, to modern-day Manhattan, with the samurai sword-wielding MacLeod taking on the power-mad Kurgan (Clancy Brown).

A few of the additions simply replace earlier, minuscule trims, such as longer fight sequences, or Kurgan licking the priest's hand in a church. Another scene features Connor and forensics expert Brenda, talking

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at a zoo, with Kurgan seen lurking in the shadows. More than just a dramatic throwaway, this provides fans with a long-overdue explanation of how Kurgan finds Brenda's apartment in the following scene. The most obvious addition is a WWII sequence explaining how Connor first met his present-day secretary, Rachel, when she was a small child and he saved her life from a Nazi officer. The additions are slight, but helpful in making a chaotic film a little clearer, since ex-music-video-director Mulcahy was obviously spending most of his time on sweeping photography and playful time-period segues.

The changes in Mulcahy's *Highlander 2: The Renegade Version* (Hemdale) were much more important, since in its original form, the universally ridiculed movie blatantly contradicted many of the first film's conceits. Set in the year 2024, with an electromagnetic shield protecting the earth from the destroyed ozone layer, viewers of the Non-Renegade Version were informed that the immortals are actually aliens from another planet, complete with flashbacks to their home world of Zeist.

In the vastly superior director's cut, 16 minutes are added, the film is restructured in a fashion similar to the first — with two parallel stories, centuries apart — and most important, the immortals are simply a much earlier race of humans; part of a warring society where rebels (including Connery and Lambert) are exiled into the future. Admittedly, even this storyline isn't so hot, but at least it attempts to explain why flying assassins suddenly pop up out of nowhere. And for viewers who wondered, "What happened to Connor's love interest from the first flick, Brenda?", there's a deathbed scene, as she dies from radiation poisoning in an overflowing hospital ward, which provides a much-needed motivation for Connor's path in life. These changes help make a sumptuously-lensed, but once-terrible movie into a worthy (but still silly) sequel.

The first two films in Clive Barker's *Hellraiser* series also experienced changes on their way to home screens; from additional graphic footage, trimmed in order to receive an R-rating, to the previously unseen "Kirsty's Room" dream sequence in the laserdisc edition of *Hellbound: Hellraiser II* (Lumivision). But when it comes to Barker's cinematic world, the most important changes were made to the video release of his underrated fantasy detective tale *Lord of Illusions* (MGM/UA).

In this melding of magic and film noir,

Continued on page 81

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Sci-Fighters: Ex-professional wrestler Roddy Piper has been carving a name for himself in sci-fi cinema, most notably in John Carpenter's 1988 paranoid vision of alien invasion, *They Live*. His latest thriller, set in Boston in the year 2009, has the rowdy one as a renegade cop tracking a rapist only to discover something more terrible than crime — the fact that the criminal he's hunting has been exposed to a mutagenic virus that's turned him into a methane-breathing lifeform whose task is to prepare Earth for alien habitation. Also starring Billy Drago (*The Untouchables*).

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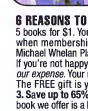
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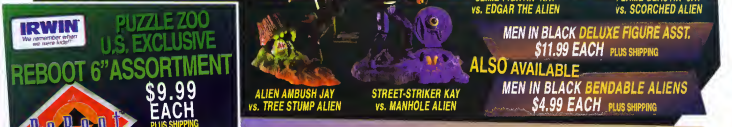
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Take a visit to the *Star Wars* universe on the way to the International Toy Fair.

BY MELISSA J. PERENSON

STILL HAVEN'T HAD ENOUGH OF THE *STAR WARS* TRILOGY? Well, remember, the Force will be with you, always … at least in the world of CD-ROMs. LucasArts Entertainment, which *Star Wars*' creator George Lucas founded in 1982, already offers a galaxy of multimedia games based on the *Star Wars* universe. And earlier this spring, LucasArts began rolling out the first of four new PC titles that will entertain the Jedi in us all.

Given the phenomenally successful rerelease of the *Star Wars Trilogy Special Edition*, LucasArts' timing couldn't have been better, even if the company insists it's merely a fortuitous coincidence. These latest LucasArts releases offer a little something for everyone, covering a gamut that includes multiplayer, strategy, and finite-time gaming.



First out of the gate was *X-Wing vs. TIE Fighter*. This CD-ROM pioneers new ground for LucasArts, as it's the first networked *Star Wars* space combat simulation that allows multiple players to simultaneously play a game in real-time via modem or a Local Area Network (LAN).

The concept for *X-Wing vs. TIE Fighter* was born out of the game's popular predecessors, 1993's *X-Wing* and 1994's *TIE Fighter*. Wayne Cline, the production manager on this project who also worked on the individual *X-Wing* and *TIE Fighter* games, notes, "*X-Wing* was our first *Star Wars* simulation. You took on the role of a young Rebel pilot, and guided that pilot's career all the way through the destruction of the Death Star. Following that we did *TIE Fighter*, which took it from the other side: You became a rookie pilot flying for the Empire. With that one, we didn't want to make the players think they were evil by flying for the Empire, so we positioned it that the Empire is there to put order in the galaxy. From those two games, it was just a natural progression to put the two together and let people fly against each other, especially now that multiplayer games are more popular and the technology is there to do them well."

The advancements in technology from recent years were key to implementing multiplayer support. "We're using Microsoft Windows 95 only, and we're using Windows' DirectX 1.0 protocols, so we can really work off of the multiplayer programming that Microsoft's already set in place," continues Cline. Microsoft's DirectX is a set of system drivers that replace your existing Windows 95 display and sound drivers. This governs the connection between the two players, how the players communicate, and also the information, or the packets, that are sent back and forth to computers during the game. In the last year, these aspects have become a lot smoother, especially with respect to "dropped packets," which is information that gets sent by one computer and doesn't make it to the other side; this has been smoothed out so that each computer understands the game state at any one time. Every time you're playing a multiplayer game, you can have either what's called a



ABOVE: *You'll need the power of the Force to survive the latest batch of* Star Wars *multimedia games.* BELOW: *Fan favorite Boba Fett plays a pivotal role in Lucas' gaming universe.*



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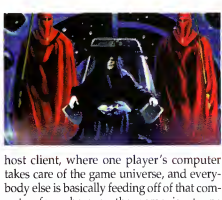
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host client, where one player's computer takes care of the game universe, and everybody else is basically feeding off of that computer for wherever the game is at one moment, or you can have peer-to-peer, where everybody's own computer is keeping track of the game, and the packets being sent back and forth are really there just to update information and make sure that every computer agrees with what's going on."

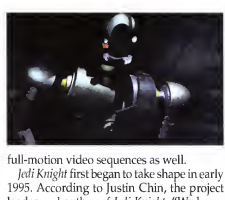
There are limitations to the multiplayer technology, though. "Over a LAN, you'll be able to play up to eight players, and over 28.8 kilobits-per-second Internet modem connection it will be up to four players," notes Cline. That's because as more people play, the more processing power it takes, and it can get pretty choppy if more than four players are playing on the Internet. It really isn't a fault of the game so much as a reflection of latency issues over the Internet."

The game has both single and multiplayer modes, with about 60 missions total on which you to test your skills. Of those, about 45 missions can be used in either a single- or multi-player capacity. You choose whether you want to fly for the Empire or the Rebellion, select your squadron from more than a dozen Rebel, Imperial, and Pirate starfighters, and, then, once you're briefed on the mission's goals and objectives, you can communicate with squad mates to discuss your battle strategy and tactics. The settings are familiar, ranging from the Endor star system to asteroid fields like the one the *Millennium Falcon* navigated through in *The Empire Strikes Back*. The graphics engine has been upgraded as well, providing better 3-D modeling, texture mapping, and light-sourcing.



The latest batch of Star Wars *games gives you everything you need to feel like a Jedi Knight.*

The second multiplayer *Star Wars* game to hit the market is a sequel to 1995's hit, *Dark Forces*. However, *Jedi Knight: Dark Forces 2*, one-ups *X-Wing vs. TIE Fighter* by offering full-motion video sequences as well.



Jedi Knight first began to take shape in early 1995. According to Justin Chin, the project leader and author of *Jedi Knight*, "We knew we were going to do a sequel, and I had to figure out what kind of story it would involve, and what type of a game it was going to be. And those really actually go very hand in hand; when designing a game like this, you have to think about both of those things. My approach was to come up with some ideas, and then fill out the main action and the main goals, of the game. I wanted the character to become a Jedi, to have a quest, and then also to fight an evil — all of those big things that a *Star Wars*-type film would have.

"A character will earn that right to become a Jedi, and also make the decision whether or not to be on the Light side or the Dark side of the Force. Those things are natural progressions of the story as well as game play. It's about that trek, a quest, baptism by fire. There are all kinds of things that you can

Continued on page 72

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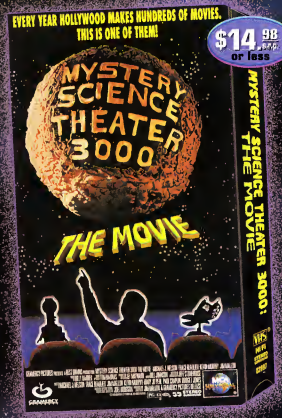
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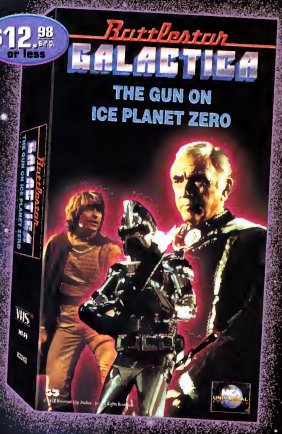
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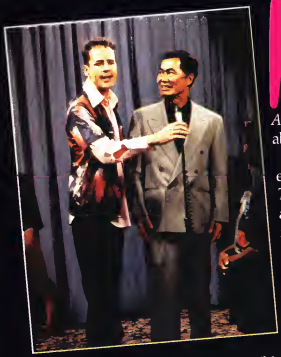
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Rockin' the House with Third Rock

French Stewart and Kristen Johnston are no aliens when it comes to slapstick comedy.

BY DAN PEREZ



Star Trek's *George Takei guest-starred on an episode that had the alien visitors invading a local sci-fi convention, to disastrous — and hilarious — results.*

First came Ray Walston, sprouting silvery antennae in 1963's *My Favorite Martian*. Then, in 1978, Robin Williams spouted his goofy Orkan greeting "Nanoo nanoo!" in *Mork and Mindy*. In 1986 we got the funny-snouted puppet alien *Alf* and since then there haven't been any hit comedies about extraterrestrial visitors.

Not until now, that is. In 1996, NBC aired the first episode of a mid-season replacement series called *Third Rock From the Sun*. The quirky comedy immediately caught fire, collecting good reviews and great ratings. NBC has a penchant for labeling even its clunker shows (is there anyone who actually likes *The Single Guy* or *Boston Common*?) as "Must See TV" but in the case of *Third Rock*, the hyperbole is truly accurate. In less than a year, the show has hit its stride and begun to rack up awards nominations left and right, and its ringleader, the irrepressible John Lithgow, has won an Emmy and a Screen Actor's Guild award for his work on the show thus far.

And best of all, it's a hilarious show. Written by *Saturday Night Live* alumni Terry and Bonnie Turner, *Third Rock* carooms from sophisticated deadpan humor (often delivered by



The Marx Brothers of alien visitors with their Earthly contacts (clockwise from top): French Stewart, John Lithgow, Simbi Khali, Elmarie Wendel, Jane Curtain, Kristen Johnston, and Joseph Gordon-Levitt.



ABOVE: *Guest-star Jan Hooks watches in horror as French Stewart turns a Thanksgiving dinner into a fashion show.* CENTER: *A frustrated Mike Ditka attempts to explain football to the clueless quartet.* RIGHT: *Gordon-Levitt, Stewart, Lithgow and Johnston have proven themselves masters of slapstick .*

former Conehead Jane Curtin) to broad slapstick worthy of the Three Stooges: no surprise, perhaps, since the Turners drew inspiration from the Marx Brothers.

Lithgow plays Dick Solomon, the High Commander of a group of incognito alien observers assigned to Earth. He's supported by a talented ensemble of comedians including Curtin, who plays Dr. Mary Albright, his human love interest, Kristen Johnston as Sally Solomon, the tough-as-nails security officer, French Stewart as Harry Solomon, a squinty-eyed space case, and Joseph Gordon-Levitt as a hormonally-charged, wise-beyond-his-years teenager Tommy Solomon. Together, the cast creates a whacked-out, beguiling chemistry.

"They took a long time casting it," says French Stewart of the show. "Pretty much, we hit it off real quick. I think it took like three or four episodes before we really started hitting our stride. Some of the early ones are much different than the ones we're doing now. Basically the gloves have kind of come off and it's just a mug-fest now! (laughs) It's fun that way, but it took a while to get going."

"It's not forced," says Kristen Johnston, who plays Sally. "No one cracks me up harder than the rest of this cast. It's sort of robbing from a baby—I feel like I can't believe I'm getting paid to have this much fun. I think we're all really grateful. That was the beauty of casting a lot of people from the theater because for French and I — we've been flogging at this for a while now, and it's kind of great to just be able to appreciate it. It's nice."

Stewart, who speaks in a normal-sounding voice and doesn't squint when not in character as Harry, is a big fan of silent comedies, including "anything that Buster Keaton does. I love *The General* and *Spite Marriage*; they're really great. And Chaplin — I love *City Lights* and I've got a bunch of his shorts — they put out a volume of tens of his shorts. From time to time I used to go to this silent film place [here in L.A.] and watch them on the big screen while this guy would be sitting there playing a ragtime piano. It was really great."

Johnston's inspiration flows from a different source. "I just think I draw on so many years in the theater in different roles and I do really love the actresses of the thirties and forties in that they were so broad but so real at the same time. Did you ever see the *Star Trek* episode where they go to the *Star Trek* convention and we get stuck in a hotel room? There's this great scene where Sally becomes this sort of grand dame of the hotel, where she starts ordering room service. That I sort of played as an homage to Joan Crawford,



where I was like: dah-ling! You just draw on different things — actors you like, and one of the great things about this show is that you can tap into different actors that you really have always loved."

Watching the show, it's hard not to think that there's no risk this cast is unwilling to take. "You know what?" Stewart

says, "I think John sets that standard right off the bat, because John will be an absolute jackass, working absolutely without a net. He's terrific. You can basically do anything because John will do anything. In the art show, he revealed himself naked in front of the entire studio audience and dared everyone to film it. Which is a lot of why I think the show works. We're having a good time so [viewers] have a good time."

"We just try to one-up each other," says Johnston. "We're a great breeding ground for comedy because we try to out-mug each other. They set up such a great premise that the writers and the actors can go anywhere. There's no way watching the show that anyone would say, 'Oh, she wouldn't do that' because the fact of the matter is she might! (laughs) No one knows. The writers know that they can make an enormous deal out of something as simple as joining a book club or buying tampons. These little rituals or little human oddities that everybody takes for granted are what the aliens can look upon with fresh and, hopefully, pretty hilarious eyes."

Stewart maintains that the cast improvises during tapings "almost every week. You get a great script at the beginning of the week, then we go in and we have the luxury of having the producer/writers on the set, so we're able to say, 'What if I do this?' or 'What if I try that?'. Sometimes somebody will have an idea for a bit so it's a really creative process. That's what I like about it."

"The writing is just so damned good," says Johnston, "that usually that takes care of it. But in terms of the physicality of the show, we come up with most of it. The writers and executive producers are so brilliant. We'll do a scene one way all week and then in front of the audience someone will come up and whisper a line in my ear or French's ear and the audience will just go insane. They're really great at that."

One of Harry's most hilarious bits was in the Thanksgiving show, when he and the landlady's daughter (played by Jan Hooks) flirt wildly over the turkey carcass, culminating in Harry slipping the carcass onto his head like a hat. Stewart can clearly be seen cracking up during this sequence. "Basically what happened was we only had a few takes to really do that and you're dealing with a limited amount of turkey carcasses. So we were doing it, it was he way she was licking and stroking this turkey leg in the most lascivious way, you know, and she'd never done it before. Jan just cracked me up and they just sort of kept it."



"It's people like Jan and Wayne Knight," notes Johnston, "they come into the show with the same attitude we have, which is make it funny, show up, no ego, and she was just a blast."

Knight, of course, plays the scheming postal worker Newman on *Seinfeld*, but he also guest stars on *Third Rock* as a policeman who carries on an arch flirtation with Sally. "I love that storyline," Johnston says. "They kept trying to hook me up with hot guys. You know what I mean: young studs. And I kind of went 'it'd be so cool if we kept this Wayne Knight thing going because of course Sally would be attracted to him because he has a gun and he's law enforcement.' And I think it's perfect for her to be interested in somebody like him as opposed to someone incredibly handsome."

For Johnston, sudden celebrity and being recognized has been kind of startling. "Let's just say that I'm aware of the impact television has on America. (laughs) And being a non-television watcher myself it sort of boggled my mind. I had no idea what I was in for. Some moments I'm pleasantly surprised, and some moments I kinda wish I'd stayed in the theater. But no, it's really a great thing. It's been totally out of the blue for French and me. The rest of the cast — John's had twenty years to prepare, as has Jane, so French and I are kind of in cahoots to make sense of it all."

Stewart agrees. "It's totally gotten crazy. It's funny because now, at airports or basketball games where there are large concentrations of people, it can get a little bit ... kooky. When I'm just out and about during my day, it just happens here and there and you can deal with it. You feel like you're sort of at an immediate disadvantage, because they know who you are, but you don't know who they are. Sometimes when they walk up to you, you're thinking, 'Do I know this person?'

"Everyone on the show is just so incredibly grounded," says Johnston, "and that's not PR

Continued on page 78



LEFT: *Director Luc Besson surrounded by his bizarre alien creations.* BELOW: *The gritty city of the future, as inspired by famed illustrator Moebius.* INSET BELOW: *Bruce Willis portrays the accidental hero, New York City cabbie Korben Dallas, who must save our universe.*

Director Luc Besson is hoping that star Bruce Willis brings him a luc-crative blockbuster in *The Fifth Element*.

BY DR. CRAIG REID

and the fifth shall be first



The year is 1914, the place is Egypt. It's just prior to the war that was supposed to end all wars. Our world existed in a dimension where the universe was blind to the evil that lurked in another reality. In the dimension next door, the elements earth, wind, fire, and water have been replaced by anti-energy. Anti-life. There, in a parallel world, darkness tarries impatiently at the threshold of the cosmos, waiting for an opportunity to extinguish all life and all light, waiting to steal our life's energy — and every 5,000 years our universe creates a hero to save us. This is the world director Luc Besson created, a world he gave birth to age 16. *The Fifth Element* manifested itself from the psyche of an adolescent searching for that hero, and twenty some years later, Bruce Willis brings that hero to life.

Sitting comfortably in his makeshift editing studio in his Malibu Beach home, where the Pacific Ocean's rolling surf knocks at his back door, French filmmaker extraordinaire Luc Besson recalls the evolution of *The Fifth Element* and how this timeless story of love and survival, heroes and villains, and good and evil,



was a constant companion of his teenaged years. His English is accented with a French lilt that immediately captures your attention "I started writing *The Fifth Element* when I was sixteen," he charmingly explains. "Now I am thirty seven. I first wrote it as a book. When I was a kid in boarding school — or boring school [he jokingly chuckles] — sixty miles from Paris in the City of Cheese, I had a lot of time to dream. It was the right place to dream about science fiction and the movie business. I had a lot of time to write. It was a way to escape from this world, a way to escape loneliness." Letting his mind wander, he adds, "I also wanted to take care of dolphins." I glimpse out over the ocean, and as if right on schedule, I notice what appear to be several dolphin fins. This reminds me that the name of his Paris based company is Les Film du Dolphin.

Thoughtfully rubbing his stubbled beard, he continues, "There was no way I imagined someday filming it. The story grew to three hundred pages. I kept this thing in a drawer for a long time. After I did *Big Blue* I asked myself if it was time to do it. It was a little too soon. But after *La Femme Nikita*, then I felt comfortable. I started to write it and eventually made a deal with Gaumont, the largest European Company. They helped me to develop it. The first draft was 400 pages and would have cost $145 million to shoot. People said, 'Hey Luc, don't you think it is just a little bit expensive?' [we laugh] But you know, on my first draft I never think of realistic needs. I



ABOVE: *The grotesque Mangalores need to destroy our world so that theirs might live.* RIGHT: *Ian Holm, beloved by fans for his role in* Alien *and other sci-fi flicks, plays Priest Cornelius.* ABOVE RIGHT: *Luke Perry must make the first defense against alien invasion.* BELOW RIGHT: *Bruce Willis was Director Luc Besson's first choice as his lead.*



"The goal of these bads from the other world is to kill life, our life. So every five thousand years they find a way, a black hole, to come to our dimension, our universe, not to make deals but to just kill light and life."



just put down on paper what I would love to see. I don't think of the money, because if you make it big, you can reduce later."

The title of *The Fifth Element* refers to the four alchemic traditional Greek elements — earth, wind, fire and water — where in aggregate they create the fifth element, life, or what is commonly known as "Akasha" in Moorish traditions. Besson quips, "When my father came across Plato's writings on the subject, he gave me a book saying, 'Do you know your film is a remake?' I read it, and the similarities of Plato's work and what I had in my script were amazing."

With wide-eyed wonderment, he shakes his head and posits, "Imagine an image of the bad at its worst, and that bad comes from another dimension. And the more we live the more we give off energy. But where does this energy go? Imagine that this energy goes to another dimension where people live in the exact opposite way to us, and they don't need our energy because they create their own. So now imagine that the energy we give off is strangling them — they die because of our life. The goal of these bads from the other world is to kill life, our life. So every five thousand years they find a way, a black hole, to come to our dimension, our universe, not to make deals but to just kill light and life."

The film opens with a towering spaceship landing with a rumble in 1914 Egypt. An archaeologist straying too close to learning the secret of the fifth element (and mankind's impending doom) is overcome by a group of giant, hybrid scorpionfly-kangaroo-faced aliens called Mondoshawans who, despite their imposing presence, work on the side of good.

Creating something you have never before seen was Besson's next challenge. "When you have a monster in your script, you don't know its price until you have its face. So you hire people to describe this thing. After one week, seven artists came up with sixty designs for it. Then, based on what I thought was the personality of the monster, I chose one. We not only did this for the monster but for everything in the movie. It is the 23rd century, so we spent a year's process just to design spaceships, vehicles, monsters, weapons, lights, apartments — even things like credit cards, plates, forks and so on."

We soon learn that Mondoshawans are the guardians of a secret weapon that can destroy this evil entity. Apparently they have a human representative on Earth, a priest of sorts, who is the only man privy to this secret that can save the Earth for another 5,000 years. But now it is the year 2259 (March 18th, 2:00 am to be precise) and the secret has been forgotten. The anti-life is back, and no one knows how to defeat him. As the Mondoshawans return to protect us, they are attacked and destroyed by fighter spaceships helmed by grotesque doglike Mangalores, mercenaries in the service of the psychotically deranged businessman Zorg (Gary Oldman) who wants to capture the secret weapon and sell it to the evil entity. All that then remains of the Mondoshawans is a genetically reconstructed, humanoid female known as "The Girl" (model Milla Jovovich, *Return to the Blue Lagoon*). Erotically clothed in bandaged strips that cover just enough to wow your imagination, the red haired Girl



swan dives into the back seat of of a cab driven by New York cabbie Korben Dallas (shades of Harry Canyon from Heavy Metal), who also happens to be an ex-major in the special forces. Dallas is portrayed by the very die-hardish Bruce Willis. Priest Cornelius (Ian Holm), the only human capable of understanding her alien tongue (which sounds like a cross between French, Swahili and Chinese), eventually and reluctantly realizes that Korben is indeed the assigned hero whose mission is to save the world.

Throughout the moments of this maiden's flight, we are bombarded with Besson's brave new world of visual imagery, where New York City still has endless lanes of traffic, trains and subways — it's just that now they are either vertically or horizontally skybound and buildingbound. Chinese take-out is still afloat, and McDonald's still survives. But what really augments the film's futuristic uniqueness was the carefully deliberate casting of the extras that beautifully and subliminally added to Besson's vision of the morrow. "I looked at thousands and thousands of people for this film," he recalls, "Even the smallest part I wanted to see. Because there is this look that I am looking for. It is difficult to predict what people will look like in the twenty-third century. So you have to switch things around. You can put someone in there that you can't expect, but then you have a person who looks like a general today look like a general in the future. The point here is that some things never change.

"My first choice for the lead was Bruce (Willis). I met him five years ago and discussed the project. You know, when people give you eight- seven million to do your dream it is smart to have someone who can help promote the film. Bruce is an excellent actor, very professional, and an easy going guy. I was happy and thrilled to work with him. So when I met him again after everything was ready, I gave him the script, went to shop for two hours, and when I return he says, 'Let's do it.' I felt like it was already a movie when he said that."

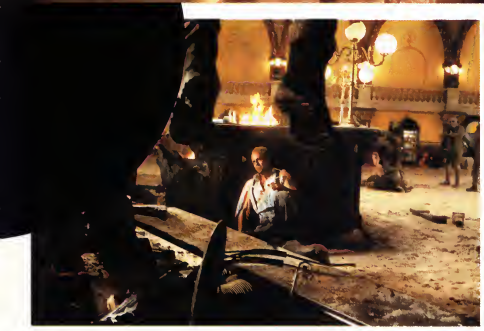
Complementing Willis is a weird menagerie of characters that includes a rocked out diva singing the operatic blues and aardvark-like garbage men on strike. Our universe's president is a cloudy-eyed black man the size of Hulk Hogan, the top radio superstar is a blonde, "sissified" version of Howard Stern, and the general population is

Complementing Willis is a weird menagerie of characters that includes a rocked out diva singing the operatic blues and aardvark-like garbage men on strike.

ABOVE: *Even the evil have their pets, and so Luc Besson had to invent one.* ABOVE RIGHT: *Once the Mangalore realize that Bruce Willis is the preordained hero, he becomes the hunted.* BELOW: The Fifth Element *carries its drama to the skies with state-of-the-art FX.* BELOW RIGHT: *Willis fans will not be disappointed by the shoot-'em-up action Besson provides.*







exotically garnished with an erotic brood of sexy, European starlets.

Bringing this city of the future and all of its inhabitants alive was initially an overwhelming challenge, but Besson amassed his own menagerie of talent. Production designer Dan Weil, who worked with Luc on his undersea adventure *The Big Blue*, supervised a team of top-rank designers and illustrators, including the legendary Moebius (aka Jean Giraud, who came into prominence illustrating the French magazine *Metal Hurlant*, reprinted in the U.S. as *Heavy Metal*) and the creative illustrator of the graphic novel "Valerian" character, Jean-Claude Mezieres. Costume designer Jean-Paul Gaultier, who did the stage sequences for Madonna's *Truth or Dare*, postulated the forthcoming fashions of our futureworld to be. Digital Domain's Mark Stetson (*True Lies, Interview with a Vampire*), the film's visual effect supervisor, was responsible for creating the photo-realistic city, a notable choice when you consider Stetson headed the model shop for *Blade Runner*, a film that essentially defined the futuristic urban look back in 1982.

Digital Domain's model shop produced more than thirty major models, the largest being the city of Manhattan, a single model tall enough to fill up two sound stages, incorporating 22 buildings, each about 8 feet in diameter. Stetson is quick to point out, "One of the most gratifying aspects of working with Luc on this picture is the fact that it's not another *Blade Runner*. The look of this film is very different and fresh. The design is actually rooted in the traditions of the French graphic novel.

"The gratifying aspect of this film was definitely mixing it up, showing digital cars literally bumper-to-bumper with model cars. It has been a lot of fun working on this picture, though it certainly multiplies the number of elements." With 240 effects shots, some shots had over 80 elements for each frame, where the miniature shooting cameras would move as close as half an inch from the detailed models.

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JURASSIC DARK



RIGHT: *Four years after dinosaurs broke loose at Jurassic Park, a band of explorers seek to discover whether any of the creatures survived. (From left to right, Vince Vaughn, Julianne Moore, Vanessa Lee Chester and Jeff Goldblum. INSET: Eddie (Richard Schiff), Sarah (Julianne Moore), Ian Malcolm (Jeff Goldblum) and Nick (Vince Vaughn) come closer than they like — the proof they need.*



It's Jeff Goldblum versus the dinosaurs in the *Jurassic Park* sequel *The Lost World.*

BY DAN PEREZ

THEY'RE BACK,

AND BY ALL REPORTS THEY'RE MEANER THAN EVER. NO, NOT MICHAEL CRICHTON AND STEVEN SPIELBERG, ALTHOUGH THEY'RE CERTAINLY BEHIND IT ALL — IT'S THE DINOSAURS OF *JURASSIC PARK* THAT HAVE

returned, in greater numbers and in greater variety, just in time for the Memorial Day weekend in the United States (Its British invasion will occur on June 18.)

Jurassic Park is the biggest blockbuster of all time, so it's no surprise that that success has now spawned a hotly anticipated sequel in the form of *The Lost World*. As most sequel writers and directors know, audiences want more of what thrilled them in the first place, but they also want things different — a tricky balance. And familiar names abound on *The Lost World*. Crichton wrote the novel (and, with David Koepp, the screenplay), Spielberg directed the movie, Dennis Muren and Stan Winston are creating the dinosaur effects, and reprising their roles from the first movie are Richard Attenborough and Jeff Goldblum. Attenborough plays John Hammond, the millionaire who created the original Jurassic Park, and Goldblum, who recently sat for an exclusive interview with *Sci-Fi Entertainment*, returns as quirky mathematician Ian Malcolm.

Goldblum is well known to genre fans for his work in such films as *The Fly* and *Independence Day*. Does he consider himself a genre-friendly actor? "I've enjoyed those specific movies," he notes. "Not that those



BELOW: *The face of an angry T-rex.* OPPOSITE: *Julianne Moore, Vince Vaughn, Jeff Goldblum, Vanessa Lee Chester, Pete Postlewaite, Harvey Jason and Peter Stormare must act in concert for their survival.* INSET: *Goldblum returns as scientist Ian Malcolm.*

BUILDING A BETTER DINOSAUR

Jurassic Park's Oscar-winners do it again in *The Lost World.*

Jurassic Park was, of course, the turning point for creature effects — a quantum leap forward from stop and go motion animation via a skillful blend of computer generated images and full-size animatronic dinosaurs. The technological wizardry would snare Oscars for its creators, Dennis Muren, Stan Winston and Phil Tippett.

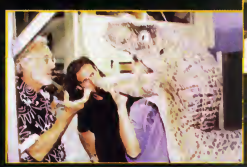
When the time came to create the dinosaurs for *The Lost World*, Muren and Winston would reunite to bring even more saurian marvels to the screen. As before, Muren and Industrial Light and Magic's team were to handle CGI effects and Stan Winston Studios would provide full-size animatronic dinosaurs.

"There have been a lot of streamlining things we've put into place to make the work go faster," says Dennis Muren. "Which means not that we necessarily get the work done in a shorter time — I wish that were the case, but the work just ends up being better and more complicated. So you end up using all the time you've got on it, but it allows us to able to do more complex shots — stuff that looks a lot neater when they're done."

Stan Winston says that there have been advances in animatronic technology since *Jurassic*, as well. "Huge improvements since *Jurassic T To The Lost World*. We have the ability to create much faster, more dramatic, more dynamic action and at the same time, subtler action, even for dinosaurs as huge as the two T-rexes in *Lost World*. They react and perform in a much more dynamic and subtle way."

One exciting development is that there will be more dinosaur footage in the sequel. "It's not quite twice the work we had before," Muren says, "but it's somewhere in that range. We have shots that run much much longer than the first show—a lot of screen time."

In addition, there will be more types of dinosaurs, including the diminutive compsognathus or "compys". "We have a herd of those," Muren says. "and we have some stegosauruses, and we have some [pachycephalosauruses]—they're called "pachys" in the film. And big giant mamenchisauruses, brachiosaur-type critters, and some parasaurolophuses we had glimpses



of in the first show—they're much more major characters in this show. And we have some of your favorites returning."

"We have a full-sized adult stegosaurus," Winston says. "We also have full-sized baby

and these *Jurassic Park* movies, too, are special and have quality in them and parts that I feel I can make myself useful in. So I've enjoyed them."

"It's fantastic," Goldblum says of working with Spielberg. "It's one of the great gifts I've ever been given. He's just a wonderful guy and a wonderful moviemaker. He's so generous and kind and down-to-Earth and regular. And friendly: On the set of *The Lost World*, he brought out his clarinet and I played the piano and for a day, between the takes, we played together. Plus, he's just an unbelievable director. He's so confident and fun to watch and nimble-minded, and both unbelievably prepared and improvisational. And helpful and smart about my acting. Just great to work with."

Since Goldblum's character was attacked and seriously injured by the T-rex in *Jurassic Park*, he spent much of the latter part of the movie prone on a table in the bunker. Will he be more active in *The Lost World*? "They've sworn us to a certain kind of secrecy," Goldblum says, "but as much as I can say — it's a nice part for me. I get to do some more things than I did in the first one. I'm as conscience-driven as I was in the first one — morally stable and passionate — but in this one I'm emotional and very driven about what it is I have to do and I get involved in a lot of action."

In the book version of *The Lost World*, Goldblum notes, Malcolm was still on the sidelines. "But not so the movie," he says with a hint of intrigue. "I can give that away."

Goldblum chuckles at his involvement with some of the all-time blockbuster movies. "It's fun to be in movies I really enjoy and that a lot of people are enjoying. I sneak into the backs of movie theaters sometimes, and it's really fun to go the first couple of weeks and see the people scream-

ing their heads off. I know they're hoping *The Lost World* will be popular and I'll bet it will be, without counting our chickens. I can imagine people will be pretty amazed at it."

Does Goldblum ever feel that he's playing second fiddle to the dazzling special effects in some of these films? "I don't. I guess, because I'm an ensemble-minded fellow anyway. Even if it's just you and me in a movie, the better you are the better it is for me. And so these guys who do the dinosaurs for instance, who won Oscars last time, are just brilliant, and to work with them is nothing but inspirational. and besides which, I'm happy with the parts I've been playing in those movies, and the directors are oriented toward trying to make the most of the characters, too; Spielberg and the guys who did *Independence Day*. So I'm quite satisfied."





Goldblum, who has also played roles in more modest genre fare such as *Powder* and *Hideaway,* says that he tends to choose his roles by instinct. "More than anything, it's a feeling I have — something about it really turns me on, it's stuff I can be passionate about, and it feels right for me in some way, and seems like something I want to experience. You try to turn a made-up situation into a real experience as if you're really having it, so there has to be something personal in the experience that's going to be adventurous or fun or meaningful to go through."

Having played a number of roles that can be described as quirky or eccentric, Goldblum notes that his fans don't necessarily identify him with those roles. "If anything, these days, people seem to associate me with 'Hey, you're the guy who saves the world.' [laughs] 'How's it feel?' I go, 'Good!' And luckily, there's less of the quirkiness in *The Lost World* to the character than there was even in *Jurassic Park*, and again I do some heroic things."

On working with Stan Winston's animatronic dinosaurs, Goldblum says, "Oh, wait



stegosaurus that is completely live-action. We've also created, for *The Lost World*, a baby T-rex which is almost totally live action — very few CG shots of the baby T-rex. It's a completely self-contained dinosaur, a great actor and an amazing animal. Of course, we brought back the raptors, and we also have brought in, for this movie, the compys, which are nasty little critters. We were very concerned that we would be able to get the kind of fluid and dynamic action necessary out of such a small dinosaur, but we were able to accomplish that.

Muren notes that for his team, the biggest challenge of *The Lost World* was improving on what had gone before. "I think one of the hardest parts was figuring out how to make it better. The big breakthrough was when you suddenly saw CG instead of stop motion. There were many people at the time saying, 'I don't know why you want to do computer graphic dinosaurs when go motion looks so good.' And the same thing was going on at the beginning of this: people were saying 'I don't know why you want to do *Jurassic Park* again because what can you do better than the first time?' And that's the trick."

There were obstacles for the animatronic team to overcome, as well. "We were dealing with more dinosaurs," Winston says, "a necessity for more performance, more varied performances in the dinosaurs, more interaction between dinosaur and human actors. So along with it being a larger volume of challenge, and a greater challenge by virtue of the performances we had to come up with it was also a greater challenge because we wanted to do a better job. All of our electronics have been completely redesigned, new hardware, new software. The performances are far beyond what we were able to get in *Jurassic 1*. You're going to see some action like you can't believe."

One improvement in *The Lost World* is in the increased complexity of the interaction between the CGI dinosaurs and the actors. "The first show," notes Muren, "we were relatively timid in the shot design. It may not have shown up that way, but we really were—we really didn't know if we could pull any of it off. We didn't go all out, hog wild with camera moves and creatures—just as though you were really there with these creatures. It just wasn't a free as this film is."

The Lost World has got, according to Muren, "something that I've always liked, a documentary kind of look. It's very naturalistic."

Winston sums up what he thinks viewers can expect in *The Lost World*, as well: "It's more, it's bigger, it's better!"

—Dan Perez

until you see it — it's unbelievable. They've made leaps forward with that and they're sophisticated and unbelievable. They'll knock your eyes out, as will the Dennis Muren Industrial Light and Magic stuff."

Is it difficult to work with animatronic dinosaurs? "Not really. Stan has things so prepared that it's just amazing. Everything is just ready to go. We actors are saying, 'Well, what are we doing today?' — a little bit shooting from the hip. But you can't do that with those guys. And everything has been like a shuttle mission: planned and prepared for, and they're just amazing."

Goldblum likes the organized approach. "Because, the way [Spielberg] conducts things between us and the animatronic things — he does it in a very kind of spontaneous and lively way, so there's nothing strained about it."

He was also pleased to be reunited with Richard Attenborough. "Oh, he's a dream. I love that guy. It's wonderful: We have a big scene together and we shot it in a day toward the end of the schedule." Are their characters still at odds? "Well, you know, Hammond's a lovable and wonderful guy, but misguided. Finally, our larger agenda is in concert this time. He does some things that are very riling to me, and irksome, and engage my passions to their core. But finally we're kind of in sync. In fact, he's been kind of won over by my lectures from the first time. He now knows that I'm right, but we disagree in the way we have to go about it. But he's a good guy this time, and so am I."





Principal photography for the movie took place "in Humboldt County, in the Eureka Woods, in those big redwood forests there. Remarkable looking place. And the last three days, we were in Kauai [Hawaii], where we started out the first one, where we got hit by that hurricane. But most of the time, in the middle, like on the first one, we were in the backlot and on the soundstages at Universal."





It's been well publicized that the cast and crew of *Jurassic Park* were trapped on Kauai when Hurricane Iniki struck the island. "It was amazing," Goldblum remembers, "We, the cast and crew, staying at this hotel, just all gathered in this ballroom and set up deck chairs to ride this thing out for many, many hours. We all pitched in. It was tragic — three people died on the island, and everybody lost everything. It was very sad, but we made it out okay and Kathy Kennedy, our producer, was very heroic, and luckily our company could contribute something to putting the island back together and getting supplies to people."

The biggest challenge Goldblum faced on *The Lost World* were his action scenes. "There are many scenes which are very physical and we're muddy and rained on for days in the shoot, and we're suspended over dangerous precipices. I really don't want to give anything away, but there was a lot of physical struggle and fighting. The whole thing was a herculean fight for survival." Were there any real dangers? "Steven and the whole crew are so safety - conscious that, in fact, all the struggling we did was out of our imagined danger. Every day it just takes it out of you."

According to Goldblum, "Steven brought the whole movie in, I think it was six days under schedule. He's so confident, he was moving like a house afire, and everyone around him was doing their best, so it keeps moving. More than any other set before, I'd never stay on my own and kind of work on things — I'd stay on the set and watch Steven set up shots. That was educational and really fun. And the cast was so fun. Vince Vaughn had me laughing like a hyena, and Julianne Moore and Pete Postlethwaite were just great. And Arliss Howard, Peter Stormare, and Richard Schiff — a really fun group. That was the most fun of it: hanging out with them."

The production wrapped back around Christmas, but postproduction is ongoing. Goldblum hasn't got another project going just yet. "Now I'm just teaching acting at this place called Playhouse West in North Hollywood," says Goldblum, "and playing piano here and there at a club or a bar." And yes, Goldblum did his own piano playing in *Earth Girls Are Easy*.

Goldblum's final thoughts on *The Lost World* are simple: "I'm very excited about it. I think people are going to get a kick out of it." ■

ABOVE: Things turn ugly for Kelly (Vanessa Lee Chester), Ian Malcolm (Jeff Goldblum) and Sarah Harding (Julianne Moore). BELOW LEFT: Goldblum (third from left) and company must run for their lives. ABOVE LEFT: Harding and Malcolm fear the worst.

It's George Clooney's turn to don the famous cape and cowl in the latest installment of the Batman franchise.

BY MELISSA J. PERENSON

TO THE Batmobile!

There's a distinct chill being felt in Gotham City, and it's not due to any ordinary weather cold front passing through town. Gotham's villain-du-jour — Mr. Freeze — needs to harness the power found within diamonds to stay alive, and he's unleashing a chilly crime wave on the metropolis in order to determined to procure his life source. Of course, for a certain caped crusader and his partners, it's just another day at the office.

The fourth installment in Warner Bros.'s *Batman* film series, the eagerly-awaited *Batman and Robin* is due to be released June 20th in the U.S. and June 27th in the U.K. Reports from the set indicate that this film will be a wild, action-packed adventure that should have no problem upholding *Batman*'s blockbuster box-office tradition — *Batman Forever* was 1995's highest grossing film, after all. But there are other reasons that this Bat will fly far, not the least of which being the tremendous publicity and brouhaha over Val Kilmer's parting with the production, and the selection of George Clooney, best known to millions for his role on NBC's *ER*, as the heir apparent to the Bat suit.





TV heartthrob George Clooney becomes the third big screen Batman of the modern era. OPPOSITE PAGE: *Joel Schumaker returns to direct yet another bat-extravaganza.*

There are other reasons that this Bat will fly far, not the least of which being the tremendous publicity... and the selection of George Clooney, best known to millions for his role on NBC's ER, as the heir apparent to the Bat suit.



ABOVE: *Chris O'Donnell, shown with the new Bat-boss, returned as Robin.* OPPOSITE: *Arnold Schwarzenegger became the latest celebrity to play a supervillain, in this case the icy Mr. Freeze.*



It's a Saturday afternoon in mid-March—just 13 weeks away from the movie's release — and even though principal photography is completed, *Batman* producer Peter Macgregor-Scott has just gotten back from a busy day of looping and trick shots. "We were filming a sequence last night at the Universal back lot street that we built as a Gotham street. This part was always scheduled; we have our principals doing what we call process photography, or trick shots. Like we have George hanging on a wire in front of a huge green screen 30 feet up in the air — that's what we're doing today, and tomorrow."

Pre-production on *Batman and Robin* started early in the game in October 1995, just months after *Batman Forever* opened. "We didn't actually start [set] construction until February of 1996," recalls Macgregor-Scott, "but the Art department was up and running by December, and costume department had opened up, and we were getting the machinery back in place again. It's a long process; I did *The Fugitive* in eight months and two weeks start to finish, and *Batman* takes 21 months."

Reprising his role as director is Joel Schumacher. Screenwriter Akiva Goldsman, who was also co-scripter of *Batman Forever*, began working on the script for this film for this film the same summer *Forever* was released. Although comedian Dennis Miller was brought in to punch up the script, Macgregor-Scott says, it was only "very briefly. Just to see if he had a point of view, to see if he had some things to add. He did give us a couple of very funny lines."

Shooting on the film started the second week in September, almost exactly the same point in the cycle as the third film, and finished up by the end of January of 1997. The main unit shoot lasted 92 days, while the second unit shoot lasted about 79 days. Experience paid off, notes Macgregor-Scott, who also produced Forever: production ran like a well-oiled machine. "It was very efficient. We shot actually slightly less days than we did the last one."

Gotham's villain-du-jour — Mr. Freeze — needs to harness the power found within diamonds to stay alive, and he's unleashing a chilly crime wave on the metropolis...

Winston is such a girl.
Always opting for diplomacy when he could just bombard his enemy from space with orbiting dreadnaughts.

Yeah.
A big fat girl.



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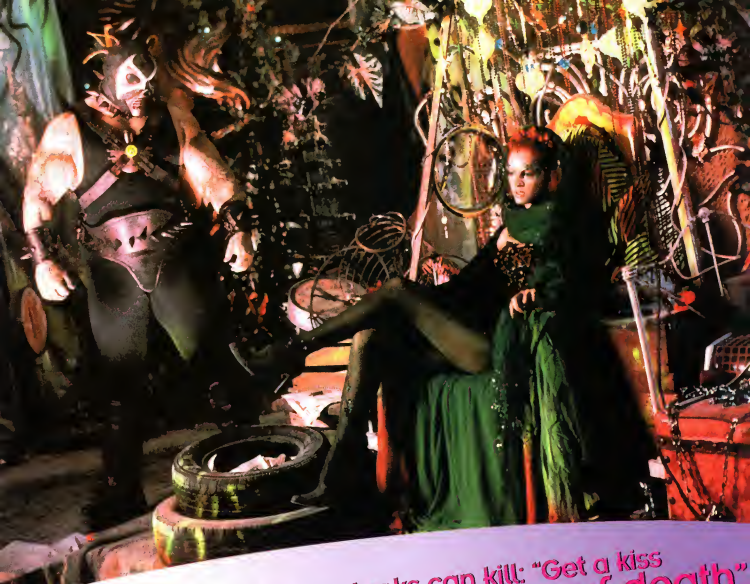
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In Poison Ivy's case, looks can kill: "Get a kiss from Poison Ivy and it can be the kiss of death"

ABOVE: Pulp Fiction's *Uma Thurman plays the deadly Poison Ivy, who teams up with Mr. Freeze to wreak havoc on Gotham City.* OPPOSITE: *Alicia Silverstone (as Batgirl, center) is anything but clueless as the hero who turns the dynamic duo into a titanic trio.*

The story is filled with a cacophony of elements and new characters. "Mr. Freeze needs diamonds to power up his machines and keep him cool. When he was trying to save his wife from a deadly illness, an experiment went wrong and he fell into a cryogenic solution, which has required that he remain in sub-zero degrees," explains Macgregor-Scott. "Mr. Freeze also wants to find a cure for a disease his wife has, and thereby saving her [from her current] cryogenic state. And Alfred, who is the butler of Wayne Manor, unfortunately has a similar disease, we find out, and so he's not well in the movie. Batman and Robin, now ably assisted by the third of the trio, Batgirl, ultimately save the day."

This time around, the villainous Mr. Freeze (Arnold Schwarzennegger),joins forces with Poison Ivy (Uma Thurman), a botanist who was caught in an evil human genetics experiment gone awry. In Poison Ivy's case, looks can kill: "Get a kiss from Poison Ivy and it can be the kiss of death," says Macgregor-Scott. "When she wants to appear as normal, though, she appears as Pam Eisley. She meets Mr. Freeze and finds him captivating and fascinating, and they decide to join forces and fight the at that point dynamic duo, which later becomes the terrific trio.

"Uma Thurman was the first person cast. In fact he'd always had Uma as his first choice, and he approached her, and she said she'd very much like to play the role, so she was in place. With a mutual decision of Val not coming back — both Val and ours," he emphasizes, " — George Clooney was Joel's first choice for Bruce Wayne and the Dark Knight character. I like Val very much, he was a great Batman, but he wanted to go his own way. I think he thought he'd done the Bat."

Unlike Kilmer's aloof, un-touchable Batman, Clooney had that something extra Schumacher was looking for. "George is wonderful in it," enthuses Macgregor-Scott. "As a human being he's very accessible, but he's also extremely accessible on film, and that's an unusual talent to have."

Contrary to the rumor mill, "There was only one actor ever considered for Mr. Freeze, and it was only Arnold Schwarzenneger. It looked like we were going to have scheduling problems, but that all managed to work out, and he became available to us, and he's spectacular in it." Alicia Silverstone was Joel's first choice for Batgirl. He's known Alicia for quite a long time, before she did *Clueless*. He called her up and said he'd like her to play the role, and she said, love to. There was some rumor that we were going to replace her at some time, and that was ridiculous," states Macgregor-Scott. "I don't know where these things get started. We're just going through this thing now with Howard Stern, who a couple of weeks ago it was reported was going to play a character in *Batman* number five if we make one. And we never even talked to Howard Stern or his people about playing in a *Batman* role."

Reprising his role as Robin is Chris O'Donnell, and Michael Gough is back as beloved Wayne Manor butler Alfred Pennyworth. The star-studded cast also features supermodels Elle Macpherson and Vendela Thommessen, and *Independence Day*'s Vivica A. Fox.

Forever's production designer Barbara Ling returns to add her touch on this installment of the *Batman* series. "The design has jumped to a whole new level. The sets are large and exciting, and it's the same thing with the cinematography, with Stephen Goldblatt's work," says Macgregor-Scott. The sets includes Mr. Freeze's and Poison Ivy's respective lairs, Gotham Museum and Gotham Observatory, Gotham's rooftop Botanical Garden, and a new, reconceptualized Gotham. There's a new Batcave to replace the one destroyed by The Riddler in *Batman Forever*; a new, more powerful single-occupant Batmobile equipped with turbo thrusters and wings. The Batsuits have also been redesigned to provide greater and more accentuated detail, and even incorporate bullet-proof armor at one point in the film.

B e prepared for some spectacular special effects as well. Serving as visual effects supervisor is John Dykstra, a double-Oscar winner for his work on *Star Wars*. *Batman and Robin* embraces the whole spectrum of visual effects available, including both miniature models and computer-generated images (CGI). "We use every element in the visual effects world in this," underscores Macgregor-Scott. "We have shots that have been in the works now for about ten or eleven months."

Be here in thirty days for more behind-the-scenes secrets from the set of *Batman and Robin*. □

Alicia Silverstone was Joel's first choice for Batgirl. He called her up and said he'd like her to play the role, and she said, love to.



Where no one has gone before

Take a trek under the sea for a romp with the real heir to Roddenberry's brainchild.

BY JOHN C. BUNNELL

It was billed as a ground-breaking science fiction series, one that stretched the limits of television's technology and imagination. Led by a dynamic, charismatic commander, its characters faced a variety of scientific challenges, ancient mysteries, and moral crises each week while exploring a largely uncharted frontier. But its ratings were never high enough to satisfy network executives, and even ardent fan support only kept the show alive in prime time for three seasons. Nonetheless, the series has refused to die, as episodes of *seaQuest DSV* have now been picked up for rebroadcast by the Sci-Fi Channel in the U.S....



Wait a minute. *seaQuest DSV*? Not that *other* famous sci-fi show?

The comparison sounds strange at first, but in fact the parallels between *seaQuest DSV* and *Star Trek* are more striking than might be apparent at first glance. In a very real sense, Stephen Spielberg's *seaQuest DSV* is a direct descendant of Gene Roddenberry's *Star Trek*, and Nathan Bridger's one-of-a-kind submarine is the undersea counterpart of James T. Kirk's *U.S.S. Enterprise*. Both were (and are) visionary, trend-setting series whose first-rate production values and wide dramatic scope are unmatched in the history of science fiction television. And producers of both shows faced many of the same challenges as they attempted to realize the ambitions inherent in the two series' concepts.

For viewers of *seaQuest DSV*, the "final frontier" isn't outer space; it's Earth's own oceans. In the first third of the 21st Century, we're told, humanity desperately needs the resources and living space lying mostly unused and unexplored beneath the sea. Leading the way toward this underwater future is the crew of the seaQuest, a state-of-the-art submarine specially commissioned to explore the deepest reaches of the oceans and to safeguard the fledgling colonies taking shape beneath the waves. Designed and captained by Nathan Hale Bridger, the seaQuest carries a crew of scientists, seasoned naval officers, a teen-aged computer genius, and even a dolphin who holds Ensign's rank and can "speak" through a voice synthesizer.

One telling point of comparison was *seaQuest DSV*'S early recruitment of researcher Dr. Robert Ballard of Woods Hole Oceanographic Institute as a scientific consultant. Just as the original Star Trek creative team approached scientists such as Isaac Asimov and NASA's Jesco von Puttkamer for technical advice, *seaQuest DSV* producers tapped Ballard for input on submarine design, deep-ocean scenery, and undersea phenomena that their fictional explorers might encounter. Ballard even became an on-air tourguide, providing quick comments



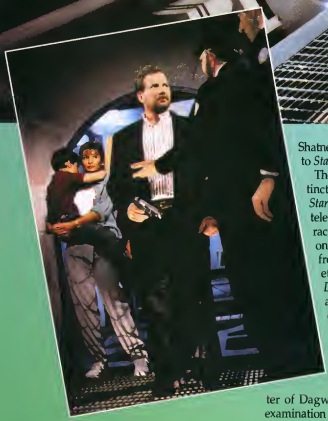
BELOW: The state-of-the-art seaQuest *took us to a future where the oceans held the secrets for mankind's survival. LEFT: Darwin the communicative dolphin was one of the series' fan favorites.*

over the first- season closing credits that helped put *seaQuest DSV*'s adventures in a real-world context.

Nor are the resemblances merely external. The United Earth/Oceans Organization, or UEO, to whom Nathan Bridger reports is easily recognizable as the near-future equivalent of *Star Trek*'s United Federation of Planets. The UEO, in fact, is more visible in *seaQuest DSV* than Starfleet and the Federation were in original-series *Star Trek*. It also has more warts and nastier internal politics; over the show's three-season run, we saw Richard Herd's prickly but sympathetic Admiral Noyce replaced by the hemmed-in Secretary-General McGath played by Michael Costello, and supplanted by the Machiavellian President Alexander Bourne of "Macronesia", played with relish by Michael York. One might even make a case that the writers of Paramount's *Deep Space Nine* have now taken a cue from the *seaQuest DSV* book, as the Federation of *DS9* has grown ever more beleaguered over the last season or two.

The closest ties between *seaQuest DSV* and the original *Star Trek* series, though, aren't merely plot points or structural similarities. Rather, what the shows share is a wide-eyed desire to explore, to see what's beyond the next star or past the next reef. It's no accident that one of the first episodes of *seaQuest DSV* involves the discovery of the lost Library of Alexandria, that another concerns research into sea-floor hydrothermal vents two miles underwater, or even that Bridger and company eventually run into the sea-god Neptune and the sunken ruins of Atlantis. Roy Scheider's weekly reminder that "beneath the surface lies the future" is a perfect tip of the hat to the world's most famous split infinitive "—to boldly go where no man has gone before." Another, more amusing bit of homage is the first-season episode "Hide and Seek", which features guest star William



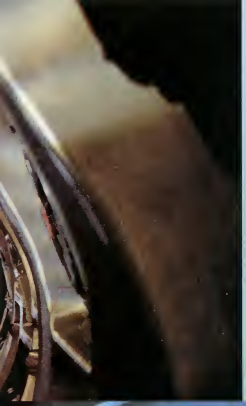


Shatner and a host of subtle references to *Star Trek* objects and situations.

The two programs also share a distinct sense of social consciousness. *Star Trek* of old is remembered for television's first documented interracial kiss and for pointed episodes on a variety of controversial issues from population control to the ethics of espionage. *seaQuest DSV* was no less ambitious. In addition to the built-in ecological themes, various episodes of the series probed the ethical consequences of telepathic powers and the hazards of irresponsible computer usage. Moreover, the character of Dagwood and the show's ongoing examination of the morality behind creation of the genetically engineered "daggers" appear positively prescient in light of recent news stories regarding developments in cloning technology.

At the same time, however, *seaQuest DSV* is far from merely an aquatic rehash of vintage Gene Roddenberry storytelling. Most noticeable of the differences is its large ensemble cast. The focus one week might be on young prodigy Lucas Wolenczak, while the following episode would highlight roguish wheeler- dealer Lt. Krieg, and the show after that would feature Ted Raimi's likeable junior-grade Lt. O'Neill. Lucas, played by Jonathan Brandis, quickly became a fan favorite, but so did second-season arrival Peter DeLuise as Dagwood, and nearly all the regular or recurring characters had their moments in the spotlight, with the possible exception of Royce D. Applegate's crusty Chief Crocker.

The other aspect in which *seaQuest DSV* diverges sharply from the *Star Trek* model lies not in the stories on the screen, but in the pro-





LEFT: *The series' first rate production values are unmatched in the history of sci-fi TV.* BELOW LEFT: *William Shatner, one of the show's many big-name guest-stars, played a notorious exiled dictator who forcibly boarded the* seaQuest. BELOW: The X-Files *was not the first show to examine things extra-terrestrial — the undersea crew discovered a million year old spaceship.* RIGHT: *Roy Scheider reminded us each week that "beneath the surface lies the future."*



duction staff behind them. Where *Star Trek* is usually recognized as very much the vision of its creator, Gene Roddenberry, *seaQuest DSV* is notable in filmed science fiction for the number and variety of its producers and writers. Rockne S. O'Bannon, co-writer of the show's two-hour premiere with Tommy Thompson, eventually garnered the credit of series creator. But the producer credits for the series vary markedly from week to week, let alone season to season. Influential roles during the first season were played by David J. Burke, David Kemper, and the team of Kerry Lenhart and John Sakmar. By the second season, all but Burke had departed, and new co-executive producer Patrick Hasburgh's staff included, among others, Les Sheldon, Lawrence Hertzog, Carleton Eastlake, and Clifton Campbell. By the time the show had been retooled (again!) for the third season, Sheldon and Hertzog were gone, Eastlake and Campbell had moved up, and new writer-producers included Lee Goldberg, William Rabkin, Phillip Carr Neel, and Harker Wade. Even with a scorecard — or an inch-thick stack of studio press releases — it's not easy to keep track of who had what job title in a given week.

What's impressive is that, even in the face of the enormous technical challenges and the ever-changing production teams, the cast and technical crew of *seaQuest DSV* rarely failed to deliver compelling performances and state-of-the-art special effects. Through the series' entire run, the on-air chemistry among the cast remained remarkably con-

Continued on page 86

WAR AND PEACE

WITH *BABYLON 5*'s LONDO AND G'KAR



Centauri Ambassador Londo Mollari (as played by Peter Jurasik, this page) and Narn ambassador G'Kar (Andreas Katsulas, opposite page), are trapped in an eternal power struggle at the heart of Babylon 5.



Friends Peter Jurasik and Andreas Katsulas discuss their roles as mortal enemies.

BY DAN PEREZ

IN A SAGA OF EPIC SCOPE, THEY ARE NEAR-MYTHIC FIGURES: MORTAL ENEMIES WHO MUST FORM A DESPERATE ALLIANCE TO SAVE BOTH THEIR PEOPLES. BOTH ARE ambassadors who have waged war and peace, and whose destinies seem permanently interlocked by prophecies and visions. They are complex characters, neither wholly good nor evil, as richly realized as any adversaries in science fiction. They are Londo and G'kar of *Babylon 5*.

By now, midseason in the fourth (and possibly final) season of the show, the unseasoned *B5* viewer most likely needs a scorecard to keep track of what's happening. After a galactic battle worthy of E.E. "Doc" Smith, the Vorlons, Shadows, and First



LONDO MOLLARI'S TIPS FOR ASPIRING CENTAURI

1. MAKE SURE YOU GET A GOOD BARBER. Even after a tough day of scheming and assassinations, you have to look good. You never know when you'll be the, ahem, hair apparent to the throne.

2. GET A GOOD TAILOR, while you're at it. Interstellar intrigue is a lot snappier when you've got that dapper look. And make sure the pants are baggy, because of those six tentacles…

3. HAVE YOURSELF A NICE, REFRESHING VIR. This is essential. A protege who can be the voice of reason and yet is still handy with the assassination weapons in a clinch is a great asset.

4. WALK THE WALK. Preferably in a good pair of high boots.

5.TALK THE TALK. Cultivate that accent by repeatedly saying, "My good friend, Mr. Garibaldi."

6.FANGS MAKE THE MAN. They're also helpful when you're talking the talk.

7. MARRY EARLY AND OFTEN. What's bigamy is also big of you, as well.

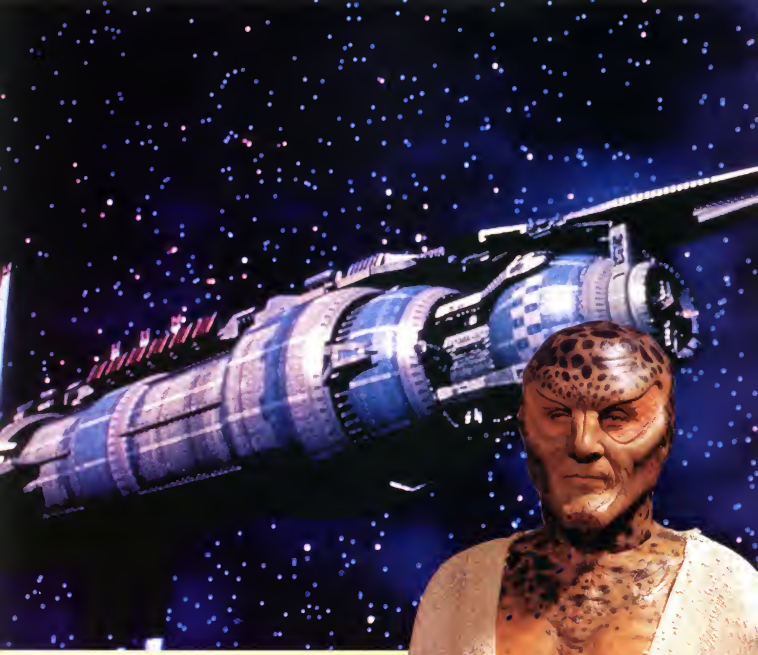
—Peter Jurasik and Dan Perez

ABOVE: *Londo Mollari advises you how best to look out for number one.* ABOVE RIGHT: *The sanctuary of Babylon 5 may represent our last, best hope for survival.* BELOW RIGHT: *G'Kar allied himself with Londo to free his people from bondage, but at a deadly price.*

Ones have left the galaxy in the care of the younger races: the humans, Minbari, Centauri, Narn, Drazi, and so on. The Caligula-like Centauri Emperor Cartagia has been assassinated, leaving Centauri Ambassador Londo Mollari (Peter Jurasik) as Prime Minister and probable ascendant to the Imperial Throne. The Narn are freed from bondage by the Centauri, thanks to a deal struck between Londo and Narn ambassador G'kar (Andreas Katsulas). The threat of war (this time with the Earth Alliance) still remains, with Babylon 5 remaining a renegade outpost.

In a show full of interesting characters, Londo and G'kar remain two of the most intriguing. Part of that intrigue, notes Peter Jurasik, is that J. Michael Strazynski's scripts are often full of surprises. "It seems that one of the earmarks now of a Joe Straczynski script, from what I hear from the fans, is how he surprises people. I genuinely can say that he surprises me. Londo in particular has become extremely volatile and is all over the place, because he's a character that is so clearly split between who he is as an individual and who he is as a politician and a man of his people. He does that jump back and forth all the time anyway. And Joe, he surprises us all the time; I can't believe where he's taken Londo. It's been quite a ride."

"I sort of live off those surprises," says Andreas Katsulas. "That's sort of the kindling wood for my creativity. If I were on *Cheers*, and playing some character that was predictably going to act and speak the same way next week as he did today — being an actor at heart that wants change and wants challenge — I'd be so bored. But with this, I purposely tell Joe not



to tell me too much in advance. I prefer getting a script and being as surprised as the audience when I get it, about what new turn this character has taken today."

Just as Londo and G'kar are a study in contrasts, Jurasik and his costar Katsulas have theirs, as well. They're good friends, but whereas Jurasik is gregarious and outgoing, Katsulas is more reserved and soft-spoken. Katsulas doesn't do on-set interviews like many other cast members, preferring to stay focused on his character. "It's always tough when you're at work, for me," he says. "I see others do it so well, and I'm envious. You know, Jerry [Doyle], he's so loose: He can walk off the set and do an interview and go back on and do the scene. Me, if I don't stay concentrated all day, I lose it (laughs)."

That concentration begins in the morning, when Katsulas goes through the ritual of having the extensive Narn makeup applied. "The whole trick is to turn it around and instead of letting it be an enemy, letting it be a friend. I see it as an opportunity; as an hour and a half in the morning to really go over the work for the day, the scenes, to quiet down. To get a hold of myself, because it's a very passive activity. Something's being done to you. And then if you follow the process and see the character as it

Please take care not to be crushed by sci-fi.

As I sat watching the latest episode of *Babylon 5*, shelves of videotapes formed a looming wall behind my back. My den is starting to look far too much like the inside of my local video store. You probably have similar such walls. If you're as old as I am — I'm 41 now, but I'll be 42 by the time you get a chance to read these words — your collection of taped television goes back to the introduction of videotaping to the general public. Whether you sided with VHS or Betamax in the early tape wars, it's remarkable how many of those plastic cartridges you can amass in a decade and a half.

Sometimes — when it's far too late at night and I should have better things to do, such as catching up on my sleep so I can have energy to do far more important things, such as edit this magazine — it seems to me that we worship these black rectangular objects in the same way and with the same sense of awe as did our ancestors at the beginning of the Stanley Kubrick and Arthur C. Clarke's masterpiece *2001: A Space Odyssey*.

It suddenly struck me as I prepared to tape another episode of the dark Chris Carter show *Millennium* that the shows that move us to pop in yet another cassette fall into many different categories. And they're not just the easy ones, no, not the typical ones you might expect, such as sci-fi, horror, romance, adventure, comedy and so forth.

Looking with guilt at the ever-growing walls of tapes, I am reminded that there is a different — and perhaps far more useful — way to categorize video cassettes than just the simple genres they apply down at your local Blockbuster.

There are the shows you tape and watch at the same time you're taping and then, blown away, immediately rewind to relive the experience one more time.

There are the ones that you watch once and then swear never to watch again — yet at the same time you can't bear to erase it.

There are the shows watched so many times that you've almost memorized them, and the fact that the image is starting to deteriorate doesn't bother you at all.

There are even the ones that you set the timer for and tape and then never bother watch at all.

But that's not all. The wall behind me, some parts constantly in motion and others gathering thick dust, holds far more complex and metaphysical equations.

For there are also the shows you remember taping, you'd be willing to *swear* you'd taped it, but though you spend long sleepless nights searching, it turns out that you'd never actually taped it at all.

There are the shows you taped just so you'd be able to tell your friends that you taped them, but which you in fact have no interest in ever watching even once.

There are the videotapes you borrowed long ago from friends, but which you keep forgetting to return, even though they keep reminding you.

There are the tapes you *deliberately* forget to return.

There are cassettes of films and TV shows that you've spent so much time listening to others tell you about that you can no longer remember whether you've actually watched them yourself.

There's the tape you bought solely because you liked the jacket art, but which you stopped watching as soon as you realized that it was a lousy movie. You keep thinking you'll give it away to a friend as a birthday gift, but you're afraid to lose the friendship.

There are the tapes you always pretended to have watched, so now you'd better actually watch for real before your friends catch you out when they're asking you to remember their favorite scenes.

There are the prerecorded tapes you bought because they were on sale and you got caught up in the sale frenzy, but which you have no intention of actually watching, and the store had a no returns policy.

Then there are the ones that don't exist at all, the ones that you only claimed to have taped in order to impress your friends.

The main problem with all these categories is that it's easy to nod your head as you read them, but it's quite another thing to determine, as you peruse your *TV Guide*, exactly which show or movie falls where. One person's *The Prisoner* is another person's prison sentence, so it's difficult to agree on when a show has us taking a welcome trek and when we'd rather be watching the commercials because the show itself is instead dreck.

Lost in Space, *Doctor Who*, *Star Trek*, *The Time Tunnel*, *Voyage to the Bottom of the Sea*, *Space: 1999* — I have heard each of these shows maligned as often as I have heard them each proclaimed the greatest SF series ever televised. So I guess I'm no help at showing you how to categorize your own collection after all. Just make sure you use strong shelving — it would be a shame to be crushed by sci-fi.

Scott Edelman

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ABOVE: *Even lifelong enemies must occasionally make uneasy allies.* RIGHT: *Londo with the ever-faithful Vir (Stephen Furst).* OPPOSITE TOP: *Londo presents G'Kar to the Emperor before his act of patriotic treason.* OPPOSITE BELOW: *G'Kar pleads with Delenn (Mira Furlan) and Lennier (Billy Mumy).*

ness and one of the things he says is — I guess he said it in one of the cell scenes on Centauri — there's no chance that these two can be friends because there's just too much history between them, too much blood between them, too much water under the bridge already. Can they gain a respect and can they ally? Well, once again, they both stand strongly as patriots now, so as long as it's put in light of sacrificing for their people maybe they'll do that. G'kar already had kind of a consciousness-raising that happened to him, and whether that finally and ultimately can be played out in a consciousness-raising with Londo is, I guess, yet to be seen. He's struggling like most of us — one step at a time."

"It is what it is," says Katsulas of the relationship between the characters. "What you see is what you get. I don't know if it takes any suddenly comes, piece by piece, to life, it becomes a pleasant part of the work and not just the drudge."

The two actors have differing views of the relationship between Londo and G'kar. "Where the relationship stands," Jurasik says, "is that it's clear now how patriotic both of them are, how much they are patriots for their people. The first four of five episodes of this season really brought that to life. I think finally they really start to see that in each other and the respect that they had for each other — I guess that there's honor among thieves and respect among warriors, even if they're on opposite sides. They have that for each other, and it's amplified by that stuff in the first part of the fourth season: They have to work together."

Is there a chance for further alliance between the two? "There's a scene Joe wrote," Jurasik goes on, "where Londo goes and kind of asks forgive-explanation. People see the show and see how Londo and G'kar react to each other in this arch conflict. I don't know — it's just built in. I don't take an intellectual approach to the acting. It says, 'You open a bottle of wine and you pour two glasses and you give the other guy one,' or, 'You open a bottle of wine and you pour two glasses and you



throw one in his face.' What's there to think about? There's nothing to analyze. I think it's perfectly clear — Londo and G'kar, their history, how they relate to each other — without me trying to add to it."

He does admit that it's subjective, however. "Some people will read a lot into that relationship and they'll associate all kinds of things from literature and go beyond. But that's to them. To me it doesn't have any resonance beyond what it is, what we see. So leave the big thinking to the big thinkers (laughs)."

"It's different with Andreas," Jurasik notes. "He's such a shoot from the hip actor — he's a guy whose strong point is spontaneity. He really is a guy who, once he gets on the set, and he's in character and the cameras start to roll, that's when what's going to happen is going to happen. So you really have to be on your toes. Intellectually, yeah, you can play out all you want. But with Londo and G'kar, what I'm trying to do is depend on my own good instincts about the character and Joe's writing, and then try to stay awake and aware of what Andreas is going to throw back at me."

Do Katsulas and Jurasik ever improvise on the set? "Almost never," Katsulas says. "Or at least, rarely. Because improvisation is a luxury of time, and that is something you just

Continued on page 80

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ALTERNATIVE MEDIA

Continued from page 38

point out with mythology and storytelling that I drew from in order to emphasize the points of game play for Jedi Knight. And you can take this character and test its mettle against other players on the Internet."

Jedi Knight, which is a first-person adventure for both Windows 95 and Macintosh systems, continues the story of Kyle Katarn, the character (and player persona) introduced in *Dark Forces*. The game requires you to navigate through over a dozen multilevel mazes and environments, learning the ways of the Jedi, while battling seven Dark Jedi along the way.

"In *Dark Forces*, we used an engine that was sort of a quirky, fake 3-D engine, so you get this immersive feel with the game, and it's just like you're really there," says Chin. "What we wanted to do with *Jedi Knight* was to make it with a full 3-D engine, with real physics. And in turn, with those improvements, we could make gameplay improvements that we couldn't do in *Dark Forces*, like being able to use Force powers, being able to block blaster bolts with a light saber, and to play multiplayer games with other characters who created Jedi Knights."

Adding to the realism are full-motion video sequences that serve as a way of furthering the story and linking the various playable elements of the game.

Also due this season is *Star Wars Rebellion* ($55 street), a real-time strategy game that pits the Galactic Empire against the Rebel Alliance. You assume the role of strategic commander of all resources, planets, and forces controlled by the Empire and the Alliance. The game can be played in either single or head-to-head multiplayer mode, and the scenarios are drawn directly from the events of the *Star Wars* trilogy. For example, if you're on the side of the Empire, you must capture Luke Skywalker and Mon Mothma, and destroy Rebel headquarters.

The fourth *Star Wars* release from LucasArts — *Yoda Stories* — is a bit different from the usual large-scale epic for which LucasArts is known. One of LucasArts' Desktop Adventures series of Windows 95 CD-ROM games, this $20 game is designed to be completed in about one hour and uses a unique game generation technology that can create countless short-game scenarios. *Yoda Stories* follows Luke Skywalker's training under the watchful eye of the Jedi Master Yoda; as a part of that training, Yoda instructs you to go off on a quest that may result in a confrontation with the enemy.

If you're a newcomer to the *Star Wars* gaming universe, be sure to pick up a copy of *The LucasArts Archives Vol. II: The Star Wars Collection*. This must-have package ($55 street) spotlights four of the best *Star Wars* titles from the '90s, including *Rebel Assault*, *Rebel Assault II: The Hidden Empire*, *TIE Fighter Collector's CD-ROM*, and *Dark Forces Super Sampler Edition*. As a bonus, also included is the new *Making of the Star Wars Trilogy Special Edition* CD-ROM, which features examples of the new visual effects, interviews with the Industrial Light and Magic wizards who operate behind the scenes, and an exclusive interview with George Lucas who discusses his motivation and goals for upgrading the films, as well as his original vision.

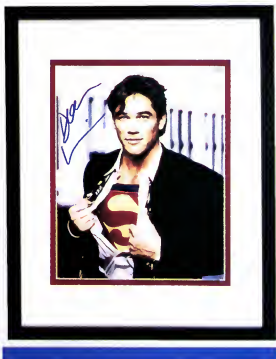
Collectors of science fiction toys have much to look forward to, given the previews we saw at the annual International Toy Fair in New York. Particularly notable with respect to media-related sci-fi toys are lines from Hasbro and Playmates. Hasbro is ramping up a full-scale assault for the imminent summer blockbuster releases of Warner Bros.' *Batman and Robin* and Universal's *The Lost World: Jurassic Park* — and that assault encompasses everything from micro-sized playsets to a range of action figures and accessories. And of course, Hasbro has its golden goose in the Kenner *Star Wars* line, which features some great toys, including the Electronic Power F/X Figure Assortment of five figures each with electronic light-up effects. The $9.99 (U.K. price still unannounced at press time) figures, some of which you may have already seen on the shelves, include: Darth Vader, Luke Skywalker Jedi Knight, and Obi-Wan Kenobi and are equipped with illuminating lightsabers; Emperor Palpatine, who dispenses bright energy bolts; and R2-D2, who has a light-up radar eye, authentic sounds, and remote action. Playmates is adding a great deal to its *Star Trek* line. However, the neatest figure, the Borg Queen, is actually from its new "collectibles" Ultra Trek line (prices will be about $50 each). Due this fall, the six-inch-high Borg Queen is not in scale with the other six-inch *First Contact* action figures; but, the well-sculpted figure does feature a removable, highly detailed torso.

Technology

Still think a PC is too expensive? Budget entry-level PCs are now being offered from most of the major manufacturers. These systems fit the bill for those who want to enter the world of the connected, but are concerned about breaking the bank. Packard Bell has a $999 system with a Pentium 120 MHz processor, 16 megabytes of EDO RAM, a 1.2 gigabyte hard disk drive, an 8X CD-ROM drive, a 33.6-Kbps fax modem, and a 14-inch color monitor. Compaq's sleek, black-finished Presario 2100 system is slightly more expensive, costing $999 for the basic system, plus about $300 for the 14-inch monitor. Plus, Compaq is using the 133-MHz Cyrix MediaGX processor, which is less expensive than the Intel Pentium processor; the system also comes with 24 megabytes of RAM, a 2.0 gigabyte hard disk drive, a 33.6-Kbps fax modem, and an 8X CD-ROM drive. □

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Here's the definitive history of the *Star Trek* universe — and a peek at the *Trek* that never was.

BY LAWRENCE TUCKER

The intergalactic saga known as *Star Trek* has evolved through four well-loved television shows, each with its own cast of characters and legion of dedicated fans: *The Original Series, The Next Generation, Deep Space Nine,* and *Voyager*. However, unbeknownst to all but the sawiest of devotees, there was once an additional *Star Trek* series, complete with actors under contract, sets under construction, designated directors,

shooting scripts, props, models, storyboards, and a season's worth of proposed episodes — a project that, like all the *Star Trek* shows, was the focus of tremendous hopes, creativity, and talent, but which died just two weeks shy of filming. Its brief, aborted history is chronicled in *Star Trek Phase II: The Lost Series* by Judith and Garfield Reeves-Stevens (New York: Pocket Books, 360 pp, $16 paperback). Reading about the series — about the planning and dreaming that led up to it, the struggle to make it a reality, and its premature demise — is a little like learning, late in life, that you once had a stillborn twin brother whose very existence, till now, was kept secret.

The story begins in the late 1970s, with the original series a decade in the past and generally regarded as something of a failure. Attempts to produce a *Star Trek* film also had failed.

"By now," recalls Jon Povill, who became story editor on the new project, "Paramount was pretty frustrated with trying to make a feature version of *Star Trek*. They'd pretty much come to the conclusion that it wasn't possible to write *Star Trek* suitably for the big screen. From this frustration, *Star Trek Phase II* was born."



Scheduled to begin shooting in the fall of 1977, *Phase II* was to be a sequel to the original series, reuniting most of the *Enterprise*'s crew, along with some newcomers, in a redesigned version of the starship. "Our new episodes portray the second five-year mission of the *U.S.S. Enterprise*," explained the guidebook for prospective writers. "The vessel functions in basically the same way. However, the details of the vessel such as instrumentation, read-out systems, and controls are vastly more sophisticated than in the original." According to a sketch reproduced in the book, it would sport what the authors call "Mickey Mouse ears" — small, unobtrusive turbolifts — atop the saucer section. As in the earlier series, it would carry 430 people, but this time half, instead of a third, would be women.

Most of the original cast would return for this new series, except for Leonard Nimoy, whose relations with *Star Trek*'s creator, Gene Roddenberry, were far from warm. Perhaps to make sure that the series wouldn't be attractive to him, Roddenberry had offered Nimoy the chance to appear in the pilot episode, but in only two of the next eleven. "I couldn't believe it," recalls Nimoy. He turned the offer down.

"Mr. Spock," the writers' guidebook piously explained, "has returned in high honor to Vulcan to head the Science Academy there." In his place, *Phase II* would feature a new character, "a full-blooded Vulcan science officer named Xon" (pronounced *Zhan*, we're told), to be played by a young unknown, actor David Gautreaux. Xon, the authors



ABOVE: *What the world now knows as* Star Trek: The Motion Picture *was originally meant to be a new TV series.* BELOW: Actor *David Gautreaux was going to replace Nimoy in the aborted series.*

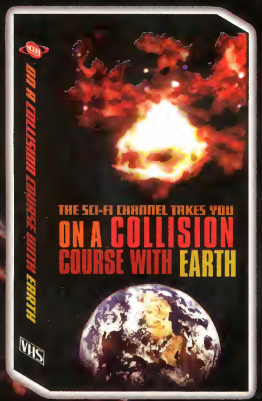
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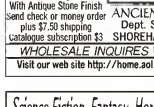
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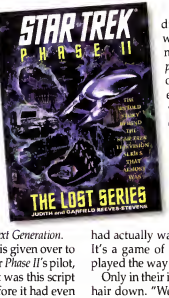
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suggest, was "the forerunner of *The Next Generation*'s Data." Another new character was Commander Will Decker, second in command to Captain Kirk.

Thanks to a color section reproducing production designs and test shots, the book lets us imagine what the series might have looked like. More important, it reprints the treatments for each of the proposed 13 episodes, some of which were later adapted for *The Next Generation*.



Nearly a third of the book is given over to Harold Livingston's script for *Phase II*'s pilot, "In Thy Image". Ironically, it was this script that helped kill the series before it had even begun. The story was so effective, so intriguing, that Paramount production executives realized that here at last was the feature film they'd been searching for. Plans for the series were scrapped; the studio plunged into production of what became, in 1979, *Star Trek: The Motion Picture*, whose screenplay is credited to Livingston.

"*Star Trek Phase II* has long been a missing chapter in the history of the *Star Trek* phenomenon," say the authors, who also wrote *The Art of Star Trek* and several series-based novels. What may surprise you is their unsentimental conclusion: that this missing chapter might well have been the *final* one if *Phase II* had actually been produced and released, instead of the first of the increasingly successful *Star Trek* movies. The TV series, they suspect, would not have attracted a large enough audience to keep the saga alive; it might well have spelled "the end of *Star Trek*....We believe *Star Trek* survived because at this critical time it did not return to television, but remained an every-few-years special event."

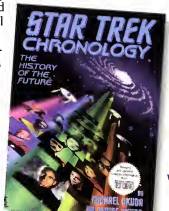
If they're right, and if *Phase II* had aired as originally planned, then a book like **Star Trek Chronology: The History of the Future** (New York: Pocket Books, 342 pp, $25 paperback) might have been a lot shorter. Written by the duo who gave us *The Star Trek Encyclopedia*, Michael and Denise Okuda (clearly there's something about the series that attracts husband-and-wife writing teams), this handsome new edition, with several color photographs on every page, has been revised and updated to include material from *Star Trek: First Contact*.

As they did in their encyclopedia, the Okudas approach the fictional world of *Star Trek* as if it were real; their *Chronology* reads like a legitimate reference work, earnest, scholarly, and filled with a truly awesome amount of information, including a series of appendices — character sketches, writing credits, technical notes, facts about the *Enterprise*, thumbnail chronologies of the Klingon and Romulan empires — that constitute a veritable mini-encyclopedia of the show. The book reminds one, in tone, of those painstakingly worked-out biographies of Sherlock Holmes that enthusiastic fans have occasionally produced, chronicling the detective's career as if he had actually walked the streets of London. It's a game of let's pretend, and it's best played the way the Okudas do — deadpan.

Only in their introduction do they let their hair down. "We choose, in this volume, to treat *Star Trek*'s invented universe as if it were both complete and internally consistent," they explain, but they're careful to remind the reader that, "In fact, the producers of the *Star Trek* television series and the feature films made things up as they went along."

Remember the comedy *Airplane!*, in which, at the height of the action, a troubleshooter bursts into the airport's control tower and demands, "Quick, tell me everything that's happened up till now"? "Well," replies the obliging staffer, "first the earth was molten, but then it cooled and life began and the dinosaurs appeared ... " The *Chronology* casts a similarly wide net, tracing the *Star Trek* universe — like our own — back to the original Big Bang around 15 billion years ago, and continuing up through the creation, some 6 billion years ago (give or take a billion), of the oracular Guardian of Forever, as seen in the famous episode "The City on the Edge of Forever." A billion years later our sun is formed — and then we're off and running.

For the record, although there's no listing for 1997, '96 is listed as the year that the Eugenics Wars ended here on earth with the overthrow of the dread Khan Noonien Singh. In this instance, the writers of the original series and of 1982's *The Wrath of Khan* seem to have been imperfect prophets — and a good thing, too. Let's hope they're no more accurate for the 21st century, when — according to several TV episodes — our planet will be "devastated by World War III ... which results in the death of untold millions of humans, and nearly returns Earth society to the stone age."



The chronology ends in the 24th century on a characteristic note of danger and uncertainty, with the *Voyager* crew stranded on a Class-M planet, their fate uncertain. It is, the authors note, a classic "cliffhanger" designed to keep us coming back for still another season.

And if history is any guide, we will. □

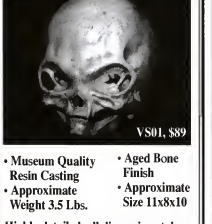


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THIRD ROCH

Continued from page 43

hype. They're really such incredible people. We're able to deal with the madness because of that. John just has a great perspective on everything and he takes what he should take seriously seriously, and what he shouldn't take seriously he doesn't. So it's great."

Stewart says he's a science fiction fan "in a strange way, I guess. I've got my own sort of favorites. I like things like the first *Star Treks*. I think they're just so cool. I don't know — there's just something about them — they're so funky and weird. There's another thing: they're like really old sci fi like *Zombies of the Stratosphere* — that type of thing from Republic, you know, where the guy's got a jet pack and it's got two settings: up and down."

"In high school," says Johnston, "I definitely went through a phase where I was reading Ursula K. LeGuin. I got into her and a couple of other sci-fi writers, but I was never a major fan. I was never a Trekkie."

The most common question Stewart fields in interviews is "about the squint. Like 'what's the deal with that? Are you really like that?' I get a lot of that. It's sort of just become a trademark. I worked for twelve years trying to get things going and it just didn't pop. And for some reason the squint turned out to be a calling card — it just made things easier in a way. It's also just a bad acting habit that got out of hand. (laughs) But what do you do?"

Johnston's most frequently asked question? "What is it like to play a man inside a woman's body?" is probably the most repetitive one, and I have no answer! I play her strength as opposed to any sort of masculinity. I just play that she's strong. I let the writers take care of the rest."

Of John Lithgow's decision to join the cast, Stewart says, "It was just such a gutsy move for him. Everybody was telling him not to do it: his agents, his friends. Everybody was telling him, 'You've been nominated for Oscars, you've got a Tony; what are you going to do a TV show for, and a sitcom at that?' But [the producers] just really sold him on the concept and he knew after his first meetings with them that he really wanted to do it. It's been the most enjoyable work experience he's had, from what I understand. You know, a sitcom stabilizes your life. You're doing films, and you're on locations maybe six months out of the year and you're someplace else and working really long hours. Whereas a sitcom, basically, before you add the extras, is nine to five, five days a week, with your weekends free. And he's got a family and so I think he's really enjoying that."

"I really think he's having the time of his life," says Johnston. "That's the impression I get from him. I didn't know him before the show. He just walks in every day with this huge Cheshire Cat grin on his face and he's thrilled. And that just bleeds into the rest of the cast. We're all just having a blast." □

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FIFTH ELEMENT

Continued from page 49

Besson insists that although this film is such a large production, he did not change his directing style.

"If you work eight hours, you have two hours of directing and six hours of problem solving, but here I almost get to point of eight hours working, eight hours directing. Ultimately to me when I work, my circle is fifteen feet around the camera. I have this one focus point — one guy for the sound, two actors, one grip, one assistant, the script, and me, I will direct and operate the camera. The circle is always the same. Whoever is in my frame, whether it is a lead, a minor character or even an extra, they are the most important person in the world at that moment. Generally I might have to spend more time with the inexperienced actors, but they are in my first circle and I will give them star treatment. Actors like Bruce and Gary though will immediately get what I would like them to do.

"But you know, if a take is no good, instead of just yelling 'cut,' explaining and reshooting, I'll talk to the actor in the middle of it and keep going because between the words of 'action' and 'cut' you have a particular moment with living energy, and I don't want to lose that. It's like you can cut someone open, reach your hands inside, massage the heart and bring it to life. So I push the actor, and push again, but [only] when they get tired, then I say 'cut.'

And how was it working with so many special effect considerations? "It was new territory, but I really just concentrated on the story. My main concern working with green screens is that it takes so much time to light. So I had three camera crews. At Pinewood Studios [in England] we had nine stages, so Mark Stetson will set up the green screen while I am doing the main staging unit, then the second unit would be doing stuff like inside the police car, tunnel shots or the motion control car, then I go check out their set up and if everything is okay and they don't need me then I go back to the first unit. And although I found doing special effects less fun than working with actors, it was not as difficult as expected."

Besson's final "shoot em up" sequence, where Willis' character is finally allowed to let loose and do what he does best is a well executed pyrotechnical, ballistic ballet bordering on the best of Woo and Peckinpah. Besson shares with us how he tackles his action sequences.

"Most of the time Americans use six cameras for coverage. Then boom, boom, boom, they create the rhythm of the pace in the editing room. For me, I write the choreography like dance movements that go from there to there, then I will decide what little tricks to add in based on what set the action takes place on. Then we rehearse fifteen to twenty times and every time I am looking for the best angle and put down the stuff [using three word swishing-like sound effects] I draw down the shot so I can remember what I want to do with it, then I shoot them one by one with one camera and without any master shots.

"In fact, the final days of the shooting were dedicated largely to the film's extensive pyrotechnics which included the largest indoor explosion ever created. It took twenty minutes for the fire crews to extinguish the blaze afterward. It was certainly an interesting way to wrap the shoot."

In wrapping our conversation Luc closes with a few words of philosophy and wisdom. Leaning back, he cracks a smile.

"You know, I am a bad Frenchman. I don't smoke, drink or like oysters or even soccer. [Perhaps] I am not French anymore? They hate me in my country maybe because I am becoming a little successful and it's not good thing to be successful when you are French." Leaning forward, his voice grows thoughtfully. "I have only one philosophy. It is to try tomorrow to be a little bit better than yesterday. I also feel that we all, one by one, have the responsibility to spend just five more minutes with our kids to make them feel better. I mean just because you raise your kids, are you sure they are happy at home? It's all about that — that is a cause to consider."

Luc Besson's *The Fifth Element* opens May 9 in the U.S. and in June in the U.K. □

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G'KAR & LANDO

Continued from page 71

don't have on a set. The hard facts of life are: You've got this day to shoot this many pages and so you better come in and know where people are going to stand, where they're going to move to. You can't come in with as sort of open, honest question about 'let's find this together' as you would in the theater, where you have months of rehearsal and plenty of time to investigate it. You'll get fired if you come in and say 'I don't know what to do with this scene' — you'd better know what to do with the scene!

"What does happen is that occasionally an actor will come in who's thought about it and has some ideas about how it should go. In that case he talks to the director before the actual shooting day so that ... you don't waste time when it's time to shoot it, with opposing views."

"You know what?" Jurasik says. "Because we have the parameters of a script, I'm actually more apt to go way off script and goof on him. I've done a couple of pretty outrageous things to him while we were filming. But that's not his way. You're never really truly surprised. But as one actor to another, I'm always blown away by what Andreas is doing, because he's an extraordinary actor. He's really there in the moment. I overstate it if I say I'm in awe, but I have a great deal of respect for him."

Jurasik, who previously played Sid the Snitch on *Hill Street Blues*, is aware that *Babylon 5* will have a definite end to it (word is that there may be some TV movies made for TNT in lieu of a fifth season). Will Jurasik miss his co-workers when the series ends? "These people become more than friends; they're more like friends and family, and in that sense it is difficult to leave. You're letting go of a lot of people, your coworkers that you spent a lot of time creating and trying to do good work with and that's tough to put down. In terms of moving on to another project as an actor, you really look forward to it. I'm excited about when the fifth season is over, moving on to another character. From the moment I read Londo in the pilot episode, I've adored the character: he's great. He's so incredibly rich and Joe's good writing has just enriched him. But it'll be nice to move on to something else — who knows what's out there? That's part of the fun of being an actor: the mystery of what's around the next corner.

"I saw Grant Tinker on Melrose — Grant Tinker was the head of MTM. And if you remember, Sid had a little spit curl on the front of his head, and [Grant] put his arm around me and said, 'Peter, we have got to get you a character with normal hair!' Between Sid and Londo, I've got it covered with bizarre hairstyles!"

"At heart," Katsulas responds to the same question, "I'm sort of a loyal company man. When a good thing comes along, I like to ride it to the end. I'll never be at that point where scripts are coming in and people are saying 'Oh, we'd like Andreas to play this or that.' If I had that sort of enticement, my thoughts might be different. But [*B5*] is the golden egg for me. I know what's out there for me is to play more bad guys, sinister roles, playing one color, one aspect of a person, and that's it. So I'll play this as long as Joe writes it and keeps it on the air. It's very exciting. It's what I want to do."

There's a playfulness between the two actors that definitely doesn't exist, at least currently, between G'kar and Londo. Upon finding out that I'll be interviewing Jurasik later in the day, Katsulas says, "If you ask him the same questions, have about three or four times more tape in your reel! He'll fill it out for you real good."

Jurasik laughs heartily upon hearing this. "We actually have a great relationship offstage. We like each other and we're friends. He loves to bust my chops and I love to do that to him, too. I told him when people ask me about what makes our relationship work, I was going to say 'bad acting habits and bad personal hygiene is really at the heart of the relationship.'" □

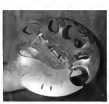
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VIDEOS

Continued from page 32

Scott Bakula stars as Harry D'Amour, a private investigator whose forte is the supernatural. On a trip to Los Angeles, he becomes involved with a David Copperfield-style illusionist named Swann, his lovely wife, and the sadistic followers of a long-imprisoned magician named Nix. But despite the video box claim that the scenes were "too shocking to be shown in theatres," the 12 minutes of new footage aren't particularly gory. Instead, they provide plenty of disturbing dream imagery, while shedding light on the occasionally confusing storyline. For example, in the shorter theatrical version, it's never clear how Nix's Manson-esque minions regroup in the desert, to await his resurrection. In the director's cut, these questions are put to rest in a wonderfully grim scene showing several of his past minions ditching their normal lives for Nix's "homecoming," while leaving a trail of family corpses in their wake.

Of course, there are numerous other recent examples of sci-fi restoration. The laser version of *Re-Animator* (Elite) includes 20 minutes of new material, including a dream sequence. The video reissue of *Dawn of the Dead* (Anchor Bay) is not only letterboxed, but contains more than 15 minutes more grue than the original theatrical release. The video version of *Stargate* (Live) clocks in with nine additional minutes. And the laserdisc release of *Robo-Cop* (Criterion) contains all the over-the-top violence which Paul Verhoeven had to trim for its U.S. release, including an extra minute of Peter Weller being blasted to shreds.

Adding new footage doesn't always make for a better movie, of course, and the reason that most of the previous examples were successes is because they were (at the very least) interesting films to begin with. An exception to that rule is the laserdisc of *The Lawnmower Man* (New Line), which contains more than 40 minutes of new material. Several scenes involving the retarded Jobe (Jeff Fahey) are included, the fate of Dr. Angelo's (Pierce Brosnan) wife is altered, yet little is accomplished, except to turn a mercifully brief sci-fiasco into a painfully protracted one.

In most of these cases, the filmmakers responsible for the work were allowed to rework their material. One of the best warnings against anyone else attempting the same task can be seen in the TV version of David Lynch's *Dune,* which (thankfully) is only available on Japanese laserdisc. Thoroughly restructured and containing 50 minutes worth of new footage (including a lengthy, introduction, accompanied by crude production drawings), Lynch quickly disowned this version and changing his directorial credit to the famed "Alan Smithee." One look at this mess, and it's obvious that when it comes to tinkering with a finished movie, it should only be left up to the original filmmakers. □



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MAY • JUNE
U.S. PROGRAMMING SCHEDULE

DAYTIME

TIME	Monday - Friday		Saturday	Sunday
6:00	Informational		Informational	Informational
6:30				
7:00	Animation Station: The Droids/The Ewoks			
7:30	Capt. Scarlet/Stingray			
8:00	New Adv of Gigantor	(Fri: The Odyssey)		
8:30	Mon-Thu: Inside Space	(Anti-Gravity Room / Friday)		
9:00	Lost in Space		Saturday Anime (movie)	Sci-Fi Buzz
9:30				Inside Space
10:00	Voyage to the Bottom of the Sea			SF Vortex
10:30				
11:00	Dark Shadows		Anti-Gravity Rm/Odyssey/Deepwater*	Alien Nation
11:30	Dark Shadows		The Odyssey	
Noon	Ripley's Believe It or Not		Amazing Stories	The Web
12:30			Dracula: The Series	
1:00	Mysteries, Magic, Miracles		Sci-Fi Buzz	The New Edge
1:30	Monsters		Trailer Park	C-Net Central
2:00	Night Gallery		Moonlight Matinee	Sightings
2:30	Beyond Reality			
3:00	The Incredible Hulk			Moonlight Matinee
3:30				
4:00	The Bionic Woman		Movie: Mystery Science	
4:30			Theater 3000	
5:00	The Six Million Dollar Man			Moonlight Matinee
5:30				
6:00	Mon: The Odyssey	Tue-Fri: Twilight Zone	Cool Stuff	
6:30	Mon: Cool Stuff	Tue-Fri: Tales/Darkside	SF Vortex (new)/Deepwater Black	

EVENING

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
7:00	Q. Leap	Q. Leap	Q. Leap	Q. Leap	She Wolf/London	Sci-Fi Feature	Sightings
7:30				Inside Space		Film	
8:00	SeaQuest	SeaQuest	SeaQuest	SeaQuest	Movie		M.A.N.T.I.S.
8:30							M.A.N.T.I.S.
9:00	Forever Knight	Forever Knight	Forever Knight	Forever Knight		Sci-Fi Feature	The Flash
9:30						Film or	
10:00	"V"	VR.5	Sightings	Sci-Fi Buzz	Friday 13th: Series	Sci-Fi Channel	Robocop: The
10:30				Inside Space		original movie	Series

LATE NIGHT

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
11:00	Q. Leap	Q. Leap	Q. Leap	Q. Leap	She Wolf/London	Movie: Mystery	The Web
11:30						Science Theater	
Midnight	SeaQuest	SeaQuest	SeaQuest	SeaQuest	Movie: Dimension	3000	The New Edge
12:30					of Darkness		C /Net Central
1:00	Forever Knight	Forever Knight	Forever Knight	Forever Knight		Trailer Park	Cool Stuff
1:30						Sci-Fi Feature	SF Vortex
2:00	"V"	VR.5	Sightings	Sci-Fi Buzz	Friday 13th: Series	Film of	Sightings
2:30				Inside Space		Sci-Fi Channel	
3:00	Informational	Informational	Informational	Thriller	Thriller	Original Movie	Trailer Park
3:30						RoboCop: Series	

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56008	The Cigarette Smoking Man (Only available in #56702 asst.)	
56009	Lithograph Season One	$200
56701	4-pc. Collector's Boxed Set I	$100
	(One each of #56001-#56004)	
56702	22-pc. Collector's Assortment	$550
	(3 each of #56001-#56007 & 1 of #56008 plus free P.O.P display)	

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MAY - JUNE MOVIES AND SPEC

FRIDAY, May 2

7:00 p.m. The Dark Secret of Harvest Home 1978, Occult, Betty Davis
11:00 p.m. The Dark Secret of Harvest Home 1978, Occult, Betty Davis

SATURDAY, May 3

9:00 a.m. 8 Man After 1992, Anime
2:00 p.m. This Island Earth 1955, Science Fiction, Jeff Morrow
4:00 p.m. The Thing That Couldn't Die, 1997, Science Fiction, Mike Nelson
7:00 p.m. Twilight Zone: The Movie 1983, Science Fiction, Vic Morrow
9:00 p.m. Evolver 1995, Science Fiction, John Delancie
11:00 p.m. The Thing That Couldn't Die 1997, Science Fiction, Mike Nelson
1:30 a.m. Evolver 1995, Science Fiction, John Delancie

SUNDAY, May 4

3:00 p.m. Trancers 2: The Return of Jack Deth 1991, Science Fiction, Tim Thomerson
5:00 p.m. Evolver 1995, Science Fiction, John Delancie

MONDAY, May 5

9:01 p.m. Millennium 1989, Science Fiction, Kris Kristofferson
1:01 a.m. Millennium 1989, Science Fiction, Kris Kristofferson

TUESDAY, May 6

9:01 p.m. Time Master 1995, Science Fiction, Micheal Dorn
1:01 a.m. Time Master 1995, Science Fiction, Micheal Dorn

WEDNESDAY, May 7

9:01 p.m. Time Runner 1990, Science Fiction, Mark Hammil
1:01 a.m. Time Runner 1990, Science Fiction, Mark Hammil

THURSDAY, May 8

9:01 p.m. The Navigator: A Medieval Odyssey 1988, Fantasy, Bruce Lyons
1:01 a.m. The Navigator: A Medieval Odyssey 1988, Fantasy, Bruce Lyons

FRIDAY, May 9

6:30 p.m. Making of "The Fifth Element" 1997, Science Fiction
8:01 p.m. Body Parts 1991, Horror, Jeff Fahey
12:01 a.m. Body Parts 1991, Horror, Jeff Fahey

SATURDAY, May 10

9:00 a.m. Robot Carnival, Science Fiction
12:00 p.m. Making of "The Fifth Element" 1997, Science Fiction
2:00 p.m. Evolver 1995, Science Fiction, John Delancie
4:00 p.m. The Undead 1997, Science Fiction, Mike Nelson
7:00 p.m. Puppet Master 4 1993, Horror, Gordon Currie
8:30 p.m. Cocoon: The Return 1988, Fantasy, Don Ameche
11:00 p.m. The Undead 1997, Science Fiction, Mike Nelson
1:00 a.m. Cocoon: The Return 1988, Fantasy, Don Ameche

SUNDAY, May 11

3:00 p.m. Psycho 2 1983, Suspense, Anthony Perkins
5:00 p.m. Psycho 4: The Beginning 1990, Suspense, Anthony Perkins
8:00 a.m. Making of "The Fifth Element" 1997, Science Fiction

TUESDAY, May 13

6:30 p.m. Making of "The Fifth Element" 1997, Science Fiction

THURSDAY, May 15

2:00 p.m. Making of "The Fifth Element" 1997, Science Fiction

FRIDAY, May 16

6:00 p.m. Making of "The Fifth Element" 1997, Science Fiction
8:01 p.m. Return of the Living Dead 1985, Horror, Clu Gulager
12:01 a.m. Return of the Living Dead 1985, Horror, Clu Gulager

SATURDAY, May 17

9:00 a.m. Vampire Hunter D 1989, Anime
2:00 p.m. The Evil of Frankenstein 1964, Horror, Peter Cushing
4:00 p.m. Terror From the Year 5000 1997, Science Fiction, Mike Nelson
7:00 p.m. Pulse 1988, Horror, Cliff DeYoung
9:00 p.m. SFC Original Movie
11:00 p.m. Terror From the Year 5000 (807) 1997, Science Fiction, Mike Nelson
1:30 a.m. SFC Original Movie

SUNDAY, May 18

9:00 a.m. Making of "The Fifth Element" 1997, Science Fiction
3:00 p.m. Twilight Zone: The Movie 1983, Horror, Vic Morrow
5:00 p.m. SFC Original Movie

THURSDAY, May 22

9:31 p.m. Trapped in Space 1993, Science Fiction, Jack Wagner
1:01 a.m. Trapped in Space 1993, Science Fiction, Jack Wagner

FRIDAY, May 23

6:30 p.m. Making of "The Lost World 1997
7:00 p.m. Frankenstein: The True Story 1974, Gothic Horror, James Mason
11:00 p.m. Frankenstein: The True Story 1974, Gothic Horror, James Mason

SATURDAY, May 24

9:00 a.m. Project AKO (Lbx Ver) 1992, Anime
12:00 p.m. Making of "The Lost World 1997
2:00 p.m. SFC Original Movie
4:00 p.m. The She Creature, 1997, Science Fiction, Mike Nelson
7:00 p.m. The Last Child 1971, Science Fiction, Michael Cole
8:30 p.m. The Handmaid's Tale 1990, Science Fiction, Natasha Richardson
11:00 p.m. The She Creature 1997, Science Fiction, Mike Nelson
1:00 a.m. The Handmaid's Tale 1990, Science Fiction, Natasha Richardson

SUNDAY, May 25

9:30 a.m. Making of "The Lost World" 1997, Science Fiction
3:00 p.m. Trancers 4: Jack of Swords (New) 1993, Science Fiction, Tim Thomerson
4:30 p.m. Fahrenheit 451 1967, Science Fiction, Julie Christie
3:00 a.m. Making of "The Lost World" 1997, Science Fiction

MONDAY, May 26

9:00 a.m. Hothra 1962, Science Fiction, Hiroshi Koizumi
11:00 a.m. King Kong Escapes 1968, Science Fiction, Rhodes Reason
1:00 p.m. Destroy All Monsters (LBX Ver) 1963, Science Fiction, Godzilla
3:00 p.m. Godzilla vs. Hedorah (LBX Ver) 1971, Science Fiction, Godzilla
5:00 p.m. Godzilla on Monster Island, 1972, Science Fiction, Hiroshi Ishikawa
7:00 p.m. Godzilla vs. The Cosmic Monster 1974, Science Fiction, Masaaki Daimon
9:01 p.m. Godzilla vs. Megalon 1976, Science Fiction, Katsumiko Sasakai
11:00 p.m. Destroy All Monsters (LBX Ver) 1963, Science Fiction, Godzilla
1:01 a.m. Godzilla vs. Hedorah (LBX Ver) 1971, Science Fiction, Godzilla

TUESDAY, May 27

5:00 p.m. Making of "The Lost World" 1997, Science Fiction

THURSDAY, May 29

2:00 p.m. Making of "The Lost World" 1997, Science Fiction

FRIDAY, May 30

6:00 p.m. Making of "The Lost World" 1997, Science Fiction
8:01 p.m. Pet Semetary 1989, Horror, Fred Gwynne
12:01 p.m. Pet Semetary 1989, Horror, Fred Gwynne

SATURDAY, May 31

9:00 a.m. Doin: Photon Space Sailor Starlight 1989, Anime
2:00 p.m. Twilight Zone: The Movie 1983, Horror, Vic Morrow
4:00 p.m. The Giant Spider Invasion, 1997, Science Fiction, Mike Nelson
7:00 p.m. The Tower 1985, Science Fiction, Ray Paisley
9:00 p.m. Wedlock 1991, Science Fiction, Rutger Hauer
11:00 p.m. The Giant Spider

IALS ON THE SCI-FI CHANNEL



Mark Hammil stars in Time Runner, *airing Wednesday, May 7.*

Invasion, 1997, Science Fiction, Mike Nelson
1:00 a.m. SFC Original Movie
1:30 a.m. Wedlock 1991, Science Fiction, Rutger Hauer

SUNDAY, JUNE 1

3:00 p.m. Tarantula 1955, Science Fiction, John Agar
5:00 p.m. The Deadly Bees 1967, Horror, Suzanne Leigh

FRIDAY, JUNE 6

8:01 p.m. Children of the Night 1991, Horror, Karen Black
12:01 a.m. Children of the Night 1991, Horror, Karen Black

SATURDAY, JUNE 7

9:00 a.m. Project A-KO vs. Battles 1 & 2 1991, Anime
2:00 p.m. Islands of Terror 1966, Horror, Peter Cushing
4:00 p.m. Parts: The Clonus Horror 1997, Science Fiction, Mike Nelson
7:00 p.m. The Rejuvenator 1988, Science Fiction, Marcus Powell
9:01 p.m. Deep Red 1994, Science Fiction, Michael Bienn
11:00 p.m. Parts: The Clonus Horror (811) 1997, Science Fiction, Mike Nelson
1:31 a.m. Deep Red 1994, Science Fiction, Michael Bienn

SUNDAY, JUNE 8

3:00 p.m. Dopplegangger 1990, Science Fiction, Drew Barrymore
5:00 p.m. Deep Red 1994, Science Fiction, Michael Bienn

MONDAY, JUNE 9

9:01 p.m. One Million Years BC 1966, Prehistoric, Rachel Welch
1:01 a.m. One Million Years BC 1966, Prehistoric, Rachel Welch

TUESDAY, JUNE 10

9:01 p.m. It Came From Beneath the Sea 1955, Science Fiction, Kenneth Tobey
1:01 a.m. It Came From Beneath the Sea 1955, Science Fiction, Kenneth Tobey

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 11

9:01 p.m. Earth vs. The Flying Saucers 1956, Science Fiction, Hugh Marlowe
1:01 a.m. Earth vs. The Flying Saucers 1956, Science Fiction, Hugh Marlowe

THURSDAY, JUNE 12

9:01 p.m. Twenty Million Miles to Earth 1957, Science Fiction William Hopper
1:01 a.m. Twenty Million Miles to Earth 1957, Science Fiction William Hopper

SATURDAY, JUNE 14

9:00 a.m. Gall Force: Eternal Story, 1989, Anime
2:00 p.m. Deep Red 1994, Science Fiction, Michael Biehn
4:00 p.m. The Incredible Strange Creatures... 1997, Science Fiction, Mike Nelson
7:00 p.m. The Blob (1958) 1958, Science Fiction, Steve McQueen
9:01 p.m. The Blob (1988) 1988, Science Fiction, Kevin Dillion
11:00 p.m. The Incredible Strange Creatures... 1997, Science Fiction, Mike Nelson
1:31 a.m. The Blob (1988) 1988, Science Fiction, Kevin Dillion

SUNDAY, JUNE 15

3:00 p.m. Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles 1990, Adventure, Judith Hoag
5:00 p.m. Tremors 1990, Horror, Kevin Bacon

THURSDAY, JUNE 19

7:00 p.m. Masters of Fantasy: Stan Winston 1997, Science Fiction
7:30 p.m. World Wide Weird! 1997, Science Fiction
11:00 p.m. Masters of Fantasy: Stan Winston 1997, Science Fiction
11:30 p.m. World Wide Weird! 1997, Science Fiction

FRIDAY, JUNE 20

8:01 p.m. Cat People 1982, Horror, Nastassia Kinski
12:01 p.m. Cat People 1982, Horror, Nastassia Kinski

SATURDAY, JUNE 21

9:00 a.m. Record of Lodoss War 1991, Anime
12:30 p.m. Masters of Fantasy: Stan Winston 1997, Science Fiction
2:00 p.m. SSSSSSS! 1973, Science Fiction, Strother Martin
4:00 p.m. I Was a Teenage Werewolf 1997, Science Fiction, Mike Nelson
7:00 p.m. Warning Sign 1985, Science Fiction, Sam Waterston
9:01 p.m. SFC Original Movie: TBA
11:00 p.m. I Was a Teenage Werewolf 1997, Science Fiction, Mike Nelson
1:01 p.m. World Wide Weird! 1997, Science Fiction
1:31 a.m. SFC Original Movie: TBA

SUNDAY, JUNE 22

3:00 p.m. Critters 2: Main Course 1988, Science Fiction, Scott Grimes
5:00 p.m. SFC Original Movie: TBA
3:00 a.m. World Wide Weird! 1997, Science Fiction

MONDAY, JUNE 23

1:01 p.m. World Wide Weird! 1997, Science Fiction

TUESDAY, JUNE 24

9:01 p.m. World Wide Weird! 1997, Science Fiction
9:31 p.m. Masters of Fantasy: Stan Winston 1997, Science Fiction
1:01 a.m. World Wide Weird! 1997, Science Fiction
1:31 a.m. Masters of Fantasy: Stan Winston 1997, Science Fiction

THURSDAY, JUNE 26

6:00 p.m. Masters of Fantasy: Stan Winston 1997, Science Fiction

FRIDAY, JUNE 27

2:30 p.m. Masters of Fantasy: Stan Winston 1997, Science Fiction
8:01 p.m. Prince of Darkness 1987, Horror, Donald Pleasance
12:01 a.m. Prince of Darkness 1987, Horror, Donald Pleasance

SATURDAY, JUNE 28

9:00 a.m. Roujin Z 1993, Anime
8:30 p.m. Krull, 1983, Fantasy, Ken Marshall
11:00 p.m. Revenge of the Creature 1997, Science Fiction, Mike Nelson
1:01 a.m. Krull 1983, Fantasy, Ken Marshall

SUNDAY, JUNE 29

3:00 p.m. The Utilizer 1995, Science Fiction
4:00 p.m. Marooned 1969, Science Fiction, Gregory Peck

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LETTERS

Continued from page 8

until a few months ago. It was shown three times in one day on the Sci-Fi Channel. We didn't have that channel and we were told that we could not have it added. Now — they came over a short while ago, and gave us these additional channels.

Can you tell me if the Sci-Fi Channel will ever again show this movie? If so, when?

Mike Schifano

Sorry, the Channel has no immediate plans to run that dinosaur classic, but you never know what surprises tomorrow may bring.

Dear Editor:

Thank you for bringing *Mystery Science Theater 3000* to new life on the Sci-Fi Channel. I even went out and bought myself a new hi-fi stereo VCR to commemorate the occasion. Now I have six of them. The new one is strictly for your channel only. Its first use was the premiere showing of *MST3K* and it works and records beautifully.

Now for the other issue at hand. I have been elected to write to you (as always) and ask if you have, in your archives, a half-hour comedy show that was a short-lived series in 1971. It was called *The Hilarious House of Frightenstein*. This show has been brought up in many conversations and is remembered by many as one of the funniest horror comedies ever shown on television. If you come across it, check it out — you'll die laughing.

Thanks again for your time.

Your fan of Sci-Fi,

Kathy Reinekinn

Unfortunately, that particular gem is not currently in the Channel's repertoire. Good thing MST3K *is there to keep the laughter coming.*

Dear Scott:

I'm a recent subscriber to *Sci-Fi Entertainment*, but my problem is — I am *not* a recent subscriber to SF!

I've been a reader of sci-fi short stories and novels, and a dedicated fan of just about every SF film that came to our little movie theater (in my case, the Rialto Theater, in Lancaster, N.H.), and we got 'em all!

You see, I'm 58 years old, and when I was growing up during the '50s, there were some really good (if not great) SF films produced.

Lancaster was a small town. However, we did get to see some great films — *It Came From Outer Space*, *When Worlds Collide*, *Destination Moon*, *War of the Worlds* (perhaps the second best of the time), and in my humble opinion, *The Man From Planet X*, which I think is the best sci-fi film of all time — and I've seen 'em all!

I am not really entranced by the new special effects that the recent films rely on for their appeal — these are computer-generated, and while they are spectacular, let us not forget that the special effects man of the older films had to work with real time real space models, and the results were spectacular.

Quite a few of these early films have been remade (with questionable results) — *The Thing*, *Invasion of the Body Snatchers*, and a number of others with new technology productions, but to what end?

I know tastes and technology advance, but sometimes the first is the best!

So how about this — an issue devoted and dedicated to early sci-fi films, from the '30s through the '60s?

Very hopefully yours,

Lee Moody

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SEAQUEST

Continued from page 65

stant, derailed neither by the move from Los Angeles to Florida between the first and second seasons nor by the third-season arrival of Michael Ironside as Captain Oliver Hudson, displacing Roy Scheider in the center seat. And the visual effects — including a good deal of pioneering CGI work — rarely fell short of stunning, although it didn't take long for fans to begin working out which shots of Darwin were "real" and which the product of clever technical wizardry.

That chemistry and attention to detail, in its way, puts a capstone on the extended metaphor of seaQuest DSV as a 1990s counterpart to the *Star Trek* of thirty years earlier. In the show's best episodes, Captain Bridger and his crew confront personal drama and conflicts of principle with chilling plausibility, and the ocean itself is very much a character in the equation. And even in the series' strangest and most bizarre moments—visiting a mad scientist's colony of mermen in a secret undersea cavern, releasing a demon from a Pandora's box — it's possible to focus on the actors and their surroundings, and chuckle with the same sort of bemusement that goes with watching "Spock's Brain" for the ninety-third time.

Only time will tell if *seaQuest DSV* proves as durable in reruns as the original *Star Trek*, and Nathan Bridger's submarine may never become as much of a cultural icon as James T. Kirk's starship. But no other sci-fi TV series before or since has come closer to matching the potential of Gene Roddenberry's vision than seaQuest, and no other series is more deserving of the chance to try. Starting March 31 in the U.S., you'll be able to try it yourself Mondays through Thursdays at 8:00 PM EST, with a repeat at midnight, only on the Sci-Fi Channel. □

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Dear Editor:

I managed to get my hands on J. Michael Straczynski's copy of *Sci-Fi Entertainment*. Thanks to you and Dan Perez for the fantastic article [on *Babylon 5*]! After four seasons of no credit for my Koshism, I very much appreciate the attention.

One clarification to be mentioned: In the photo captions, it mentions I'm the Associate Producer. In fact, I'm the Producer's Associate. Susan Norkin is *B5*'s Associate Producer and rightfully deserves the fans know that. She is responsible for our Post Production and might make for a great interview!

Again, please thank Mr. Perez and a big Gracias to you!

Jeffrey Willerth

Dear Editor:

As millions of people (and millions of dollars) can testify, George Lucas' unorthodox notion of going back to the *Star Wars* trilogy to update and upgrade the visual and sound effects was a great success. Films that were already excellent were made even better.

I, for one, hope that Mr. Lucas will start a trend. Several trends, in fact. For example, the novelizations and comic books should also get an upgrade. The writing style of the former and the artwork of the latter left something to be desired, as I recall. Of late, *Star Wars* books and comic books have been getting much better. Why not make these first somewhat crude efforts worthy of the later triumphs? It would not be the first time such a thing has been done. The dean and paragon of comic books, *Superman*, has been rewritten and redrawn so many times *(ab ovo,* from the baby-carrying space probe fired by Jor-El from the doomed planet Krypton) that I have lost count, and I'm certain that I'm far from being the only one.

But getting back to movies: I publicly urge Mr. George Lucas to do a thorough special-effects revision of his *Howard the Duck*. My beautiful date and I loved that movie very much, but most critics and movie-goers did not. It must be that most people lack the imagination to suspend disbelief and see a real duck instead of some guy in a ridiculous duck suit. But Lucas, of all people, should know that it is not too late to go back and draw, paint and superimpose an animated anatid over the silly costume, and thereby turn a flop into a *Roger Rabbit* type of mega-hit. What do you say, George?

But do not stop at your own movies. You should also revise Fritz Lang's *Metropolis*, and *When Worlds Collide*, and the original *King Kong*, and many other brilliant old science fiction movies that are moved by powerful and original ideas, but stumble because of crude and cheesy special effects — which you can replace with state-of-the-art wonders produced by Industrial Light and Magic computers.

And while you are at it, you can correct another defect of those old movies. They always assumed that in the future, only Caucasians would fly in spaceships. That is certainly not true. We have had, and we have, plenty of astronauts of African-American ancestry, and of other ethnicities — even one with the wonderful name of Franklin Chang-Diaz, of Chinese-Hispanic ancestry. So the computer should be used to insert people of various colors and races in the crews of the spaceships. Of course, people will accuse me of preaching "political correctness." Heck, no. I just want realism. A monochromatic starship crew is just plain not realistic. It is very naive, not just racist.

This is especially obvious in *Metropolis*. Can anyone seriously maintain that in any enormous city of the next century that the exploited underclass will consist of peach-colored Caucasians? No, no. Even in Scandinavia and Germany, those downtrodden masses will consist largely of brown-skinned people. Unless, by some miracle, true equality has been achieved everywhere, and there is no underclass anywhere. Even though this would be the "politically correct" prediction to make, I fear that it is not too likely.

Maybe if we want to improve the future, one way to do it would be to improve the past's view of the future. Let us treat the old films like the Hubble telescope, and keep on fine-tuning them until we get a clear view.

Benjamin Urrutia

Now that George Lucas has started a trend of updating old films, perhaps he should re-work his own Howard the Duck *(right), or the silent classic* Metropolis *(below).*





Dear Scott:

I just received the February issue of *Sci-Fi Entertainment*, and I need to point out a little error in the *Mars Attacks* feature.

Annette Bening is married to Warren Beatty, not Jack Nicholson.

J. Ellison

We regret any confusion caused by momentarily mixing up Ms. Bening's real life husband with her on-screen spouse — though considering her beauty and talent, we imagine that Mr. Nicholson might be more regretful than we are!

Dear Sirs:

I watched a movie (rented) called *One Million Years B.C.* which starred Raquel Welch. My father said that it wasn't quite as good as the original, which starred Victor Mature and Carol Landis. I told him there wasn't any other movie like that. He took me to a video store and showed me that both versions were listed.

You can't rent the earlier version (1940); the catalog said it would cost me $9.95 to buy, but the store was not able to order it for whatever reason. It was never shown on TV

Continued on page 86

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